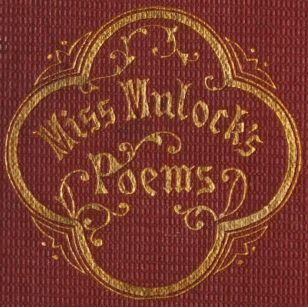
Miss Mulock's
Poems

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# POEMS

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN,"
ETC.

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*TO*

HENRY BLACKETT, Esq.,

A TOKEN OF RESPECT AND ESTEEM FROM

AUTHOR TO PUBLISHER.

# PREFACE.

MANY of these Poems, extending over a period of several years, have appeared anonymously in Chambers's Journal and elsewhere. The frequent reprinting of them, here and in America, has induced the author to collect, select, revise, and claim her errant children.

Whether they were worth collecting, and are really "Poems," public opinion must decide.

The present edition in the "Blue and Gold" series contains many pieces not heretofore collected.

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# POEMS.

## PHILIP MY KING.

"Who bears upon his baby brow the round
And top of sovereignty."

LOOK at me with thy large brown eyes,
Philip my king,
Round whom the enshadowing purple lies
Of babyhood's royal dignities:
Lay on my neck thy tiny hand
With love's invisible sceptre laden;
I am thine Esther to command
Till thou shalt find a queen-handmaiden,
Philip my king.

O the day when thou goest a wooing,
Philip my king!
When those beautiful lips 'gin suing,
And some gentle heart's bars undoing

Thou dost enter, love-crowned, and there
Sittest love-glorified. Rule kindly,
Tenderly, over thy kingdom fair,
For we that love, ah! we love so blindly,
Philip my king.

Up from thy sweet mouth, — up to thy brow,
Philip my king!
The spirit that there lies sleeping now
May rise like a giant and make men bow
As to one heaven-chosen amongst his peers:
My Saul, than thy brethren taller and fairer
Let me behold thee in future years; —
Yet thy head needeth a circlet rarer,
Philip my king.

— A wreath not of gold, but palm. One day,
Philip my king,
Thou too must tread, as we trod, a way
Thorny and cruel and cold and gray:
Rebels within thee and foes without,
Will snatch at thy crown. But march on, glorious,
Martyr, yet monarch: till angels shout
As thou sit'st at the feet of God victorious,
"Philip the king!"

## THOUGHTS IN A WHEAT-FIELD.

"The harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels."

N his wide fields walks the Master,
In his fair fields, ripe for harvest,
Where the evening sun shines slant-wise
On the rich ears heavy bending;
Saith the Master: "It is time."
Though no leaf shows brown decadence,
And September's nightly frost-bite
Only reddens the horizon,
"It is full time," saith the Master,
The wise Master, "It is time."

Lo, he looks. That look compelling
Brings his laborers to the harvest;
Quick they gather, as in autumn
Passage-birds in cloudy eddies
Drop upon the seaside fields;
White wings have they, and white raiment,
White feet shod with swift obedience,
Each lays down his golden palm-branch,
And uprears his sickle shining,
"Speak, O Master, — is it time?"

O'er the field the servants hasten,
Where the full-stored ears droop downwards,
Humble with their weight of harvest:
Where the empty ears wave upward,
And the gay tares flaunt in rows:
But the sickles, the sharp sickles,
Flash new dawn at their appearing,
Songs are heard in earth and heaven,
For the reapers are the angels,
And it is the harvest time.

O Great Master, are thy footsteps
Even now upon the mountains?
Art thou walking in thy wheat-field?
Are the snowy-winged reapers
Gathering in the silent air?
Are thy signs abroad, the glowing
Of the distant sky, blood-reddened, —
And the near fields trodden, blighted,
Choked by gaudy tares triumphant, —
Sure, it must be harvest time?

Who shall know the Master's coming?
Whether it be at dawn or sunset,
When night dews weigh down the wheat-ears,
Or while noon rides high in heaven,
Sleeping lies the yellow field?
Only, may thy voice, Good Master,

Peal above the reapers' chorus,
And dull sound of sheaves slow falling, —
"Gather all into My garner,
For it is My harvest time."

## IMMUTABLE.

"With whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

AUTUMN to winter, winter into spring,
Spring into summer, summer into fall, —
So rolls the changing year, and so we change;
Motion so swift, we know not that we move.
Till at the gate of some memorial hour
We pause — look in its sepulchre to find
The cast-off shape that years since we called "I" —
And start, amazed. Yet on! we may not stay
To weep or laugh. All which is past, is past
Even while we gaze the simulated form
Drops into dust, like many-centuried corpse
At opening of a tomb.

Alack, this world
Is full of change, change, change, — nothing but change!

Is there not one straw in life's whirling flood
To hold by, as the torrent sweeps us down,
Us, scattered leaves; eddied and broken; torn
Roughly asunder; or in smooth mid-stream
Divided each from other without pain;
Collected in what looks like union,
Yet is but stagnant chance, — stopping to rot
By the same pebble till the tide shall turn;
Then on, to find no shelter and no rest,
Forever rootless and forever lone.
O God, we are but leaves upon Thy stream,
Clouds on Thy sky. We do but move across
The silent breast of Thine infinitude
Which bears us all. We pour out day by day
Our long, brief moan of mutability
To Thine immutable — and cease.

Yet still
Our change yearns after Thine unchangedness;
Our mortal craves Thine immortality;
Our manifold and multiform and weak
Imperfectness, requires the perfect ONE.
For Thou art ONE, and we are all of Thee;
Dropped from Thy bosom, as Thy sky drops down
Its morning dews, which glitter for a space,
Uncertain whence they fell, or whither tend,
Till the great Sun arising on his fields
Up-alls them all, and they rejoicing go.

So, with like joy, O Light Eterne, we spring
Thee-ward, and leave the pleasant fields of earth,
Forgetting equally its blossomed green
And its dry dusty paths which drank us up
Remorseless, — we, poor humble drops of dew,
That only wished to freshen a flower's breast,
And be exhaled to heaven.

O Thou supreme
All-satisfying and immutable One,
It is enough to be absorbed in Thee
And vanish, — though 't were only to a voice
That through all ages with perpetual joy
Goes evermore loud crying, "God! God! God!"

## FOUR YEARS.

AT the midsummer, when the hay was down,
Said I, mournfully, — My life is at its prime,
Yet bare lie my meadows, shorn before the time,
In my scorched woodlands the leaves are turning brown.
It is the hot midsummer, and the hay is down.

At the midsummer, when the hay was down,
Stood she by the streamlet, young and very fair,
With the first white bindweed twisted in her hair, —
Hair that drooped like birch-boughs, — all in her simple gown.
For it was midsummer, — and the hay was down.

At the midsummer, when the hay was down,
Crept she, a willing bride, close into my breast:
Low piled the thunder-clouds had drifted to the west, —
Red-eyed out glared the sun, like knight from leaguered town,
That eve in high midsummer, when the hay was down.

It is midsummer, — all the hay is down;
Close to her bosom press I dying eyes,
Praying, "God shield thee till we meet in Paradise!"
Bless her in Love's name who was my brief life's crown, —
And I go at midsummer, when the hay is down.

## THE DEAD CZAR.

LAY him beneath his snows,
The great Norse giant who in these last days
Troubled the nations. Gather decently
The imperial robes about him. 'T is but man,—
This demi-god. Or rather it *was* man,
And is—a little dust, that will corrupt
As fast as any nameless dust which sleeps
'Neath Alma's grass or Balaklava's vines.

No vineyard grave for him. No quiet tomb
By river margin, where across the seas
Children's fond thoughts and women's memories come
Like angels, to sit by the sepulchre,
Saying: "All these were men who knew to count,
Front-faced, the cost of honor, nor did shrink
From its full payment: coming here to die,
They died—like men."

But this man? Ah! for him
Funereal state, and ceremonial grand,
The stone-engraved sarcophagus, and then
Oblivion.

Nay, oblivion were as bliss
To that fierce howl which rolls from land to land
Exulting, — "Art thou fallen, Lucifer,
Son of the morning?" or condemning, — "Thus
Perish the wicked!" or blaspheming, — "Here
Lies our Belshazzar, our Sennacherib,
Our Pharaoh, — he whose heart God hardenèd,
So that he would not let the people go."

Self-glorifying sinners! Why, this man
Was but like other men: — you, Levite small,
Who shut your saintly ears, and prate of hell
And heretics, because outside church-doors,
*Your* church-doors, congregations poor and small
Praise Heaven in their own way; — you, autocrat
Of all the hamlets, who add field to field
And house to house, whose slavish children cower
Before your tyrant footstep; — you, foul-tongued
Fanatic or ambitious egotist,
Who thinks God stoops from His high majesty
To lay His finger on your puny head,
And crown it, — that you henceforth may parade
Your maggotship throughout the wondering world, —
"I am the Lord's anointed!"

Fools and blind!
This Czar, this emperor, this disthronèd corpse,

Lying so straightly in an icy calm
Grander than sovereignty, was but as ye, —
No better and no worse; — Heaven mend us all!

Carry him forth and bury him. Death's peace
Rest on his memory! Mercy by his bier
Sits silent, or says only these few words, —
"Let him who is without sin 'mongst ye all
Cast the first stone."

## THE WIND AT NIGHT.

SUDDEN blast, that through this silence black
Sweeps past my windows,
Coming and going with invisible track
As death or sin does, —

Why scare me, lying sick, and, save thine own,
Hearing no voices?
Why mingle with a helpless human moan
Thy mad rejoices?

Why not come gently, as good angels come
To souls departing,

Floating among the shadows of the room
With eyes light-darting,

Bringing faint airs of balm that seem to rouse
Thoughts of a Far Land,
Then binding softly upon weary brows
Death's poppy-garland?

O fearful blast, I shudder at thy sound,
Like heathen mortal
Who saw the Three that mark life's doomèd bound
Sit at his portal.

Thou mightst be laden with sad, shrieking souls,
Carried unwilling
From their known earth to the unknown stream that rolls
All anguish stilling.

Fierce wind, will the Death-angel come like thee,
Soon, soon to bear me
—*Whither?* what mysteries may unfold to me,
What terrors scare me?

Shall I go wand'ring on through empty space
As on earth, lonely?
Or seek through myriad spirit-ranks one face,
And miss that only?

Shall I not then drop down from sphere to sphere
Palsied and aimless?
Or will my being change so, that both fear
And grief die nameless?

Rather I pray Him who Himself is Love,
Out of whose essence
We all do spring, and towards Him tending, move
Back to His presence,

That even His brightness may not quite efface
The soul's earth-features,
That the dear human likeness each may trace
Glorified creatures;

That we may not cease loving, only taught
Holier desiring;
More faith, more patience; with more wisdom fraught,
Higher aspiring.

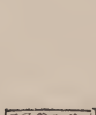
That we may do all work we left undone
Here — though unmeetness;
From height to height celestial passing on
Towards full completeness.

Then, strong Azrael, be thy supreme call
Soft as spring-breezes,

Or like this blast, whose loud fiend-festival
My heart's blood freezes,

I will not fear thee. If thou safely keep
My soul, God's giving,
And my soul's soul, I, wakening from death-sleep,
Shall first know living.

## A FABLE.



ILENT and sunny was the way
Where Youth and I danced on together:
So winding and embowered o'er,
We could not see one rood before.
Nevertheless all merrily
We bounded onward, Youth and I,
Leashed closely in a silken tether:
(Well-a-day, well-a-day!)
Ah Youth, ah Youth, but I would fain
See thy sweet foolish face again!

It came to pass, one morn of May,
All in a swoon of golden weather,
That I through green leaves fluttering
Saw Joy uprise on Psyche wing:

Eagerly, too eagerly
We followed after, — Youth and I, —
Till suddenly he slipped the tether:
(Well-a-day, well-a-day!)
"Where art thou, Youth?" I cried. In vain;
He never more came back again.

Yet onward through the devious way
In rain or shine, I recked not whether,
Like many another maddened boy
I tracked my Psyche-wingèd Joy;
Till, curving round the bowery lane,
Lo, — in the pathway stood pale Pain,
And we met face to face together:
(Well-a-day, well-a-day!)
"Whence comest thou?" — and I writhed in vain —
"Unloose thy cruel grasp, O Pain!"

But he would not. Since, day by day
He has ta'en up Youth's silken tether
And changed it into iron bands.
So through rich vales and barren lands
Solemnly, all solemnly,
March we united, he and I;
And we have grown such friends together
(Well-a-day, well-a-day!)
I and this my brother Pain,
I think we 'll never part again.

## LABOR IS PRAYER.

ABORARE est orare:
We, black-visaged sons of toil,
From the coal-mine and the anvil
And the delving of the soil, —
From the loom, the wharf, the warehouse,
And the ever-whirling mill,
Out of grim and hungry silence
Raise a weak voice small and shrill; —
*Laborare est orare:*
Man, dost hear us? God, He will.

We who just can keep from starving
Sickly wives, — not always mild:
Trying not to curse Heaven's bounty
When it sends another child, —
We who, worn-out, doze on Sundays
O'er the Book we strive to read,
Cannot understand the parson
Or the catechism and creed.
*Laborare est orare:* —
Then, good sooth, we pray indeed.

We, poor women, feeble-natured,
Large of heart, in wisdom small,

Who the world's incessant battle
  Cannot understand at all,
All the mysteries of the churches,
  All the troubles of the state, —
Whom child-smiles teach "God is loving,"
  And child-coffins, "God is great":
*Laborare est orare:* —
  We too at His footstool wait.

Laborare est orare;
  Hear it, ye of spirit poor,
Who sit crouching at the threshold
  While your brethren force the door;
Ye whose ignorance stands wringing
  Rough hands, seamed with toil, nor dares
Lift so much as eyes to heaven, —
  Lo! all life this truth declares,
*Laborare est orare;*
  And the whole earth rings with prayers.

## A SILLY SONG.

HEART, my heart!" she said, and heard
His mate the blackbird calling,
While through the sheen of the garden green
May rain was softly falling, —
Aye softly, softly falling.

The buttercups across the field
Made sunshine rifts of splendor:
The round snow-bud of the thorn in the wood
Peeped through its leafage tender,
As the rain came softly falling.

"O heart, my heart!" she said and smiled,
"There 's not a tree of the valley,
Or a leaf I wis which the rain's soft kiss
Freshens in yonder alley,
Where the drops keep ever falling, —

"There 's not a foolish flower i' the grass,
Or bird through the woodland calling,
So glad again of the coming of rain
As I of these tears now falling, —
These happy tears down falling."

## IN MEMORIAM.

Obiit 1854.

HEAVEN rest thee!
We shall go about to-day
In our festal garlands gay;
Whatsoever robes we wear
Not a trace of black be there.
Well, what matters? none is seen
On thy daisy covering green,
Or thy pure white pillow, hid
Underneath a coffin lid.
Heaven rest thee!

Heaven take thee! —
Ay, heaven only. Sleeps beneath
One who died a virgin death:
Died so slowly, day by day,
That it scarcely seemed decay,
Till this lonely churchyard kind
Opened, — and we left behind
Nothing but a little dust; —
Heaven is pitiful and just:
Heaven take thee!

Heaven keep thee:
Nevermore above the ground
Be one relic of thee found:
Lay the turf so smooth, we crave,
None would guess it was a grave,
Save for grass that greener grows,
Or for wind that gentlier blows
All the earth o'er, from this spot
Where thou wert — and thou art not.
Heaven keep thee!

## AN HONEST VALENTINE.

Returned from the Dead-Letter Office.

HANK ye for your kindness,
Lady fair and wise,
Though love 's famed for blindness,
Lovers — hem! for lies.
Courtship 's mighty pretty,
Wedlock a sweet sight; —
Should I (from the city,
A plain man, Miss —) write,
Ere we spouse-and-wive it,
Just one honest line,

Could you e'er forgive it,
  Pretty Valentine?

Honey-moon quite over,
  If I less should scan
You with eye of lover
  Than of mortal man?
Seeing my fair charmer
  Curl hair spire on spire,
All in paper armor,
  By the parlor fire;
Gown that wants a stitch in
  Hid by apron fine,
Scolding in her kitchen,—
  O fie, Valentine!

Should I come home surly
  Vexed with fortune's frown,
Find a hurly-burly,
  House turned upside down,
Servants all a-snarl, or
  Cleaning steps or stair:
Breakfast still in parlor,
  Dinner — anywhere:
Shall I to cold bacon
  Meekly fall and dine?
No, — or I 'm mistaken
  Much, my Valentine.

What if we should quarrel?
— Bless you, all folks do: —
Will you take the war ill
Yet half like it too?
When I storm and jangle,
Obstinate, absurd,
Will you sit and wrangle
Just for the last word, —
Or, while poor Love, crying,
Upon tiptoe stands,
Ready plumed for flying, —
Will you smile, shake hands,
And the truth beholding,
With a kiss divine
Stop my rough mouth's scolding? —
Bless you, Valentine!

If, should times grow harder,
We have lack of pelf,
Little in the larder,
Less upon the shelf;
Will you, never tearful,
Make your old gowns do,
Mend my stockings, cheerful,
And pay visits few?
Crave nor gift nor donor,
Old days ne'er regret,

Seek no friend save Honor,
  Dread no foe but Debt;
Meet ill-fortune steady,
  Hand to hand with mine,
Like a gallant lady, —
  Will you, Valentine?

Then, whatever weather
  Come, or shine, or shade,
We 'll set out together,
  Not a whit afraid.
Age is ne'er alarming, —
  I shall find, I ween,
You at sixty charming
  As at sweet sixteen:
Let 's pray, nothing loath, dear,
  That our funeral may
Make one date serve both, dear,
  As our marriage day.
Then, come joy or sorrow,
  Thou art mine, — I thine.
So we 'll wed to-morrow,
  Dearest Valentine.

## LOOKING DEATH IN THE FACE.

Y, in thy face, old fellow! Now's the time.
The Black Sea wind flaps my tent-roof, nor wakes
These lads of mine, who take of sleep their fill,
As if they thought they 'd never sleep again,
Instead of —
Pitiless Crimean blast,
How many a howling lullaby thou 'lt raise
To-morrow night, all nights till the world's end,
Over some sleepers here!
Some? — *who?* Dumb Fate
Whispers in no man's ear his coming doom;
Each thinks — "not I — not I."
But thou, grim Death,
I hear thee on the night-wind flying abroad,
I feel thee here, squatted at our tent-door,
Invisible and incommunicable,
Pointing:
"Hurrah!"
Why yell so in your sleep,
Comrade? Did *you* see aught?
Well — let him dream:
Who knows, to-morrow such a shout as this

He 'll die with. A brave lad, and very like
His sister.

* * * * *

So! just two hours have I lain
Freezing. That pale white star, which came and peered
Through the tent-opening, has passed on, to smile
Elsewhere, or lost herself i' the dark, — God knows.
Two hours nearer to dawn. The very hour,
The very hour and day, a year ago,
When we light-hearted and light-footed fools
Went jingling idle swords in waltz and reel,
And smiling in fair faces. How they 'd start,
Those dainty red and white soft faces kind,
If they could but behold my visage now,
Or his — or his — or some poor faces cold
We covered up with earth last noon.
— There sits
The laidly Thing I felt on our tent-door
Two hours back. It has sat and never stirred.
I cannot challenge it, or shoot it down,
Or grapple with it, as with that young Russ
Whom I killed yesterday. (What eyes he had! —
Great limpid eyes, and curling dark-red hair, —
A woman's picture hidden in his breast, —
I never liked this fighting hand to hand.)
No, it will not be met like flesh and blood,
This shapeless, voiceless, immaterial Thing,

Yet I *will* meet it. Here I sit alone, —
Show me thy face, O Death!
There, there. I think
I did not tremble.
I am a young man;
Have done full many an ill deed, left undone
Many a good one: lived unto the flesh,
Not to the spirit: I would rather live
A few years more, and try if things might change.
Yet, yet I hope I do not tremble, Death;
And that thy finger pointed at my heart
But calms the tumult there.

What small account
The All-living seems to take of this thin flame
Which we call *life*. He sends a moment's blast
Out of war's nostrils, and a myriad
Of these our puny tapers are blown out
Forever. Yet we shrink not, — we, such frail
Poor knaves, whom a spent ball can instant strike
Into eternity, — we helpless fools,
Whom a serf's clumsy hand and clumsier sword
Smiting — shall sudden into nothingness
Let out that something rare which could conceive
A universe and its God.

Free, open-eyed,
We rush like bridegrooms to Death's grisly arms:

Surely the very longing for that clasp
Proves us immortal. Immortality
Alone could teach this mortal how to die.
Perhaps, war is but Heaven's great ploughshare,
driven
Over the barren, fallow earthly fields,
Preparing them for harvest; rooting up
Grass, weeds, and flowers, which necessary fall,
That in these furrows the wise Husbandman
May drop celestial seed.
So let us die;
Yield up our little lives, as the flowers do;
Believing He 'll not lose one single soul, —
One germ of His immortal. Naught of His
Or Him can perish; therefore let us die.

I half remember, something like to this
She says in her dear letters. So — let 's die.
What, dawn? The faint hum in the trenches
fails.
Is that a bell i' the mist? My faith, they go
Early to matins in Sebastopol! —
A gun! — Lads, stand to your arms; the Russ is
here.

*Agnes.*

Kind Heaven, I have looked Death in the face,
Help me to die.

## BY THE ALMA RIVER.

ILLIE, fold your little hands;
Let it drop, that "soldier" toy:
Look where father's picture stands, —
Father, who here kissed his boy
Not two months since, — father kind,
Who this night may — Never mind
Mother's sob, my Willie dear,
Call aloud that He may hear
Who is God of battles, say,
"O, keep father safe this day
By the Alma river."

Ask no more, child. Never heed
Either Russ, or Frank, or Turk,
Right of nations or of creed,
Chance-poised victory's bloody work:
Any flag i' the wind may roll
On thy heights, Sebastopol;
Willie, all to you and me
Is that spot, where'er it be,
Where he stands — no other word!
*Stands* — God sure the child's prayer heard —
By the Alma river.

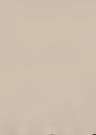
Willie, listen to the bells
Ringing through the town to-day.
That 's for victory. Ah, no knells
For the many swept away, —
Hundreds — thousands ! Let us weep,
We who need not, — just to keep
Reason steady in my brain
Till the morning comes again,
Till the third dread morning tell
Who they were that fought and *fell*
By the Alma river.

Come, we 'll lay us down, my child,
Poor the bed is, poor and hard;
Yet thy father, far exiled,
Sleeps upon the open sward,
Dreaming of us two at home:
Or beneath the starry dome
Digs out trenches in the dark,
Where he buries — Willie, mark —
Where *he buries* those who died
Fighting bravely at his side
By the Alma river.

Willie, Willie, go to sleep,
God will keep us, O my boy;
He will make the dull hours creep
Faster, and send news of joy,

When I need not shrink to meet
Those dread placards in the street,
Which for weeks will ghastly stare
In some eyes — Child, say thy prayer
Once again; a different one:
Say, "O God, Thy will be done
By the Alma river."

## ROTHESAY BAY.



U' yellow lie the corn-rigs
Far doun the braid hillside;
It is the brawest harst field
Alang the shores o' Clyde, —
And I 'm a puir harst-lassie
That stan's the lee-lang day
Shearing the corn-rigs of Ardbeg
Aboon sweet Rothesay Bay.

O I had ance a true-love, —
Now, I hae nane ava;
And I had ance three brithers,
But I hae tint them a';
My father and my mither
Sleep i' the mools this day.

I sit my lane amang the rigs
Aboon sweet Rothesay Bay.

It 's a bonnie bay at morning,
And bonnier at the noon,
But it 's bonniest when the sun draps
And red comes up the moon :
When the mist creeps o'er the Cumbrays,
And Arran peaks are gray,
And the great black hills, like sleepin' kings,
Sit grand roun' Rothesay Bay,

Then a bit sigh stirs my bosom,
And a wee tear blin's my e'e, —
And I think o' that far Countrie
What I wad like to be!
But I rise content i' the morning
To wark while wark I may
I' the yellow harst field of Ardbeg
Aboon sweet Rothesay Bay.

## LIVING:

### AFTER A DEATH.

"That friend of mine who lives in God."

LIVE!
(Thus seems it we should say to our beloved, —
Each held by such slight links, so oft removed;)
And I can let thee go to the world's end,
All precious names, companion, love, spouse, friend,
Seal up in an eternal silence gray,
Like a closed grave till resurrection-day:
All sweet remembrances, hopes, dreams, desires,
Heap, as one heaps up sacrificial fires:
Then, turning, consecrate by loss, and proud
Of penury — go back into the loud
Tumultuous world again with never a moan —
Save that which whispers still, "My own, my own,"
Unto the same broad sky whose arch immense
Enfolds us both like the arm of Providence:
And thus, contented, I could live or die,
With never clasp of hand or meeting eye
On this side Paradise. — While thee I see
Living to God, thou art alive to me.

O live!
And I, methinks, can let all dear rights go,
Fond duties melt away like April snow,
And sweet, sweet hopes, that took a life to weave,
Vanish like gossamers of autumn eve.
Nay, sometimes seems it I could even bear
To lay down humbly this love-crown I wear,
Steal from my palace, helpless, hopeless, poor,
And see another queen it at the door, —
If only that the king had done no wrong,
If this my palace, where I dwelt so long,
Were not defiled by falsehood entering in: —
There is no loss but change, no death but sin,
No parting, save the slow corrupting pain
Of murdered faith that never lives again.

O live!
(So endeth faint the low pathetic cry
Of love, whom death has taught love cannot die,)
And I can stand above the daisy bed,
The only pillow for thy dearest head,
There cover up forever from my sight
My own, my earthly all of earth delight;
And enter the sea-cave of widowed years,
Where far, far off the trembling gleam appears
Through which thy heavenly image slipped away,
And waits to meet me at the open day.

Only to me, my love, only to me.
This cavern underneath the moaning sea;
This long, long life that I alone must tread,
To whom the living seem most like the dead, —
Thou wilt be safe out on the happy shore:
He who in God lives, liveth evermore.

## IN OUR BOAT.

TARS trembling o'er us and sunset before us,
Mountains in shadow and forests asleep;
Down the dim river we float on forever,
Speak not, ah, breathe not, — there 's peace on the deep.

Come not, pale Sorrow, flee till to-morrow,
Rest softly falling o'er eyelids that weep;
While down the river we float on forever,
Speak not, ah, breathe not, — there 's peace on the deep.

As the waves cover the depths we glide over,
So let the past in forgetfulness sleep,

While down the river we float on forever,
Speak not, ah, breathe not, — there 's peace on the deep.

Heaven shine above us, bless all that love us,
All whom we love in thy tenderness keep!
While down the river we float on forever,
Speak not, ah, breathe not, — there 's peace on the deep.

## THE RIVER SHORE.

For an old tune of Dowland's.

WALKING by the quiet river
Where the slow tide seaward goes,
All the cares of life fall from us,
All our troubles find repose:
Naught forgetting, naught regretting,
Lovely ghosts from days no more
Glide with white feet o'er the river,
Smiling towards the silent shore.

So we pray in His good pleasure
When this world we 've safely trod,
We may walk beside the river
Flowing from the throne of God:

All forgiving, all believing,
Not one lost we loved before,
Looking towards the hills of heaven
Calmly from the eternal shore.

## A FLOWER OF A DAY.

LD friend, that with a pale and pensile grace
Climbest the lush hedgerows, art thou back again,
Marking the slow round of the wond'rous years?
Didst beckon me a moment, silent flower?

Silent? As silent is the archangel's pen
That day by day writes our life chronicle,
And turns the page, — the half-forgotten page,
Which all eternity will never blot.

Forgotten? No, we never do forget:
We let the years go: wash them clean with tears,
Leave them to bleach, out in the open day,
Or lock them careful by, like dead friends' clothes,
Till we shall dare unfold them without pain, —
But we forget not, never can forget.

Flower, thou and I a moment face to face —
My face as clear as thine, this July noon
Shining on both, on bee and butterfly
And golden beetle creeping in the sun —
Will pause, and, lifting up, page after page,
The many-colored history of life,
Look backwards, backwards.

So, the volume close!
This July day, with the sun high in heaven,
And the whole earth rejoicing, — let it close.

I think we need not sigh, complain, nor rave;
Nor blush, — our doings and misdoing all
Being more 'gainst heaven than man, heaven them
does keep
With all its doings and undoings strange
Concerning us. — Ah, let the volume close:
I would not alter in it one poor line.

My dainty flower, my innocent white flower
With such a pure smile looking up to heaven,
With such a bright smile looking down on me —
(Nothing but smiles, — as if in all the world
Were no such things as thunder-storms or frosts,
Or broken petals trampled on the ground,
Or shivering leaves whirled in the wintry air
Like ghosts of last year's joys:) — my pretty flower,

I 'll pluck thee — smiling too. Not one salt drop
Shall stain thee : — if these foolish eyes are dim,
'T is only with a wondering thankfulness
That they behold such beauty and such peace,
Such wisdom and such sweetness, in God's world.

## THE NIGHT BEFORE THE MOWING.

LL shimmering in the morning shine
And diamonded with dew,
And quivering in the scented wind
That thrills its green heart through, —
The little field, the smiling field,
With all its flowers a-blowing,
How happy looks the golden field
The day before the mowing!

All still 'neath the departing light,
Twilight, though void of stars,
Save where, low westering, Venus hides
From the red eye of Mars;
How quiet lies the silent field
With all its beauties glowing;
Just stirring, — like a child asleep, —
The night before the mowing.

Sharp steel, inevitable hand,
  Cut keen, cut kind! Our field
We know full well must be laid low
  Before its wealth it yield:
Labor and mirth and plenty blest
  Its blameless death bestowing:
And yet we weep, and yet we weep,
  The night before the mowing.

## PASSION PAST.

ERE I a boy, with a boy's heart-beat
  At glimpse of her passing adown the street,
Of a room where she had entered and gone,
Or a page her hand had written on, —
Would all be with me as it was before?
O no, never! no, no, never!
Never any more.

Were I a man, with a man's pulse-throb,
Breath hard and fierce, held down like a sob,
Dumb, yet hearing *her* lightest word,
Blind, until only *her* garment stirred:

Would I pour my life like wine on her floor?
No, no, never: never, never!
Never any more.

Gray and withered, wrinkled and marred,
I have gone through the fire and come out unscarred,
With the image of manhood upon me yet,
No shame to remember, no wish to forget:
But could she rekindle the pangs I bore? —
O no, never! thank God, never!
Never any more.

Old and wrinkled, withered and gray, —
And yet if her light step passed to-day,
I should see her face all faces among,
And say, — "Heaven love thee, whom I loved long!
Thou hast lost the key of my heart's door,
Lost it ever, and forever,
Ay, forevermore."

## OCTOBER.

IT is no joy to me to sit
On dreamy summer eves,
When silently the timid moon
Kisses the sleeping leaves,
And all things through the fair hushed earth
Love, rest — but nothing grieves.
Better I like old Autumn
With his hair tossed to and fro,
Firm striding o'er the stubble fields
When the equinoctials blow.

When shrinkingly the sun creeps up
Through misty mornings cold,
And Robin on the orchard hedge
Sings cheerily and bold,
While heavily the frosted plum
Drops downwards on the mould; —
And as he passes, Autumn
Into earth's lap does throw
Brown apples gay in a game of play,
As the equinoctials blow.

When the spent year its carol sinks
Into a humble psalm,

Asks no more for the pleasure draught,
But for the cup of balm,
And all its storms and sunshine bursts
Controls to one brave calm, —
Then step by step walks Autumn,
With steady eyes that show
Nor grief nor fear, to the death of the year,
While the equinoctials blow.

## MOON-STRUCK.

### A FANTASY.

IT is a moor
Barren and treeless; lying high and bare
Beneath the archèd sky. The rushing winds
Fly over it, each with his strong bow bent
And quiver full of whistling arrows keen.

I am a woman, lonely, old, and poor.
If there be any one who watches me
(But there is none) adown the long blank wold,
My figure painted on the level sky

Would startle him as if it were a ghost,—
And like a ghost, a weary wandering ghost,
I roam and roam, and shiver through the dark
That will not hide me. O for but one hour,
One blessed hour of warm and dewy night,
To wrap me like a pall — with not an eye
In earth or heaven to pierce the black serene.
Night, call ye this? No night; no dark — no rest —
A moon-ray sweeps down sudden from the sky,
And smites the moor —
Is 't thou, accursèd Thing,
Broad, pallid, like a great woe looming out —
Out of its long-sealed grave, to fill all earth
With its dead, ghastly smile? Art there again,
Round, perfect, large, as when we buried thee,
I and the kindly clouds that heard my prayers?
I 'll sit me down and meet thee face to face,
Mine enemy! — Why didst thou rise upon
My world — my innocent world, to make me mad?
Wherefore shine forth, a tiny tremulous curve
Hung out in the gray sunset beauteously,
To tempt mine eyes — then nightly to increase
Slow orbing, till thy full, blank, pitiless stare
Hunts me across the world?
No rest — no dark.
Hour after hour that passionless bright face
Climbs up the desolate blue. I will press down

The lids on my tired eyeballs — crouch in dust,
And pray.
— Thank God, thank God! — a cloud has hid
My torturer. The night at last is free:
Forth peep in crowds the merry twinkling stars.
Ah, we 'll shine out, the little silly stars
And I; we 'll dance together across the moor,
They up aloft — I here. At last, at last
We are avengèd of our adversary!

The freshening of the night air feels like dawn.
Who said that I was mad? I will arise,
Throw off my burthen, march across the wold
Airily — Ha! what, stumbling? Nay, no fear —
I am used unto the dark, for many a year
Steering companionless athwart the waste
To where, deep hid in valleys of white mist,
The pleasant home-lights shine. I will but pause,
Turn round and gaze —
O me! O miserable me!
The cloud-bank overflows: sudden outpour
The bright white moon-rays — ah! I drown, I drown,
And o'er the flood, with steady motion, slow
It walketh — my inexorable Doom.

No more: I shall not struggle any more.
I will lie down as quiet as a child, —
I can but die.

There, I have hid my face:
Stray travellers passing o'er the silent wold
Would only say, "She sleeps."
Glare on, my Doom;
I will not look at thee: and if at times
I shiver, still I neither weep nor moan:
Angels may see, I neither weep nor moan.

Was that sharp whistling wind the morning breeze
That calls the stars back to the obscure of heaven?
I am very cold. — And yet there is a change.
Less fiercely the sharp moonbeams smite my brain,
My heart beats slower, duller: soothing rest
Like a soft garment binds my shuddering limbs. —
If I looked up now, should I see it still
Gibbeted ghastly in the hopeless sky? —
No!
It is very strange: all things seem strange:
Pale spectral face, I do not fear thee now:
Was 't this mere shadow which did haunt me once
Like an avenging fiend? — Well, we fade out
Together: I 'll nor dread nor curse thee more.

How calm the earth seems! and I know the moor
Glistens with dew-stars. I will try and turn
My poor face eastward. Close not, eyes! That light
Fringing the far hills, all so fair — so fair,
Is it not dawn? I am dying, but 't is dawn.

*"Upon the mountains I behold the feet*
*Of my Beloved: let us forth to meet"* —
Death.

This is death. I see the light no more; I sleep.

But like a morning bird my soul
Springs singing upward, into the deeps of heaven
Through world on world to follow Infinite Day.

## A STREAM'S SINGING.

HOW beautiful is Morning!
How the sunbeams strike the daisies,
And the kingcups fill the meadow
Like a golden-shielded army
Marching to the uplands fair; —
I am going forth to battle,
And life's uplands rise before me,
And my golden shield is ready,
And I pause a moment, timing
My heart's pæan to the waters,
As with cheerful song incessant
Onwards runs the little stream;
Singing ever, onward ever,
Boldly runs the merry stream.

O how glorious is Noon-day!
With the cool large shadows lying
Underneath the giant forest,
The far hill-tops towering dimly
O'er the conquered plains below;—
I am conquering — I shall conquer
In life's battle-field impetuous:
And I lie and listen dreamy
To a double-voiced, low music,—
Tender beech-trees sheeny shiver
Mingled with the diapason
Of the strong, deep, joyful stream,
Like a man's love and a woman's;
So it runs — the happy stream!

O how grandly cometh Even,
Sitting on the mountain summit,
Purple-vestured, grave, and silent,
Watching o'er the dewy valleys,
Like a good king near his end:—
I have labored, I have governed;
Now I feel the gathering shadows
Of the night that closes all things:
And the fair earth fades before me,
And the stars leap out in heaven,
While into the infinite darkness
Solemn runs the steadfast stream—
Onward, onward, ceaseless, fearless,
Singing runs the eternal stream.

## A REJECTED LOVER.

OU "never loved me," Ada. These slow words,
Dropped softly from your gentle woman-tongue
Out of your true and kindly woman-heart,
Fell, piercing into mine like very swords
The sharper for their kindness. Yet no wrong
Lies to your charge, nor cruelty, nor art, —
Ev'n while you spoke, I saw the tender tear-drop start.

You "never loved me." No, you never knew,
You, with youth's morning fresh upon your soul,
What 't is *to love:* slow, drop by drop, to pour
Our life's whole essence, perfumed through and through
With all the best we have or can control
For the libation — cast it down before
Your feet — then lift the goblet, dry for evermore.

I shall not die as foolish lovers do:
A man's heart beats beneath this breast of mine,
The breast where — Curse on that fiend-whispering

*"It might have been!"* — Ada, I will be true
Unto myself — the self that so loved thine:
May all life's pain, like these few tears that spring
For me, glance off as rain-drops from my white
dove's wing!

May you live long, some good man's bosom-
flower,
And gather children round your matron knees:
So, when all this is past, and you and I
Remember each our youth-days as an hour
Of joy — or anguish, one, serene, at ease,
May come to meet the other's steadfast eye,
Thinking, "He loved me well!" clasp hands, and
so pass by.

## A LIVING PICTURE.

NO, I 'll not say your name. I have said
it now,
As you mine, first in childish treble,
then
Up through a score and more familiar years
Till baby-voices mock us. Time may come
When your tall sons look down on our white hair,

Amused to hear us call each other thus,
And question us about the old, old days,
The far-off days, the days when we were young.

How distant do they seem, and yet how near!
Now, as I lie and watch you come and go,
With garden basket in your hand; in gown
Just girdled, and brown curls that girl-like fall,
And straw hat flapping in the April breeze,
I could forget this lapse of years — start up
Laughing — "Come, let 's go play!"
Well-a-day, friend,
Our play-days are all done.
Still, let us smile:
For as you flit about your garden here
You look like this spring morning: on your lips
An unseen bird sings snatches of gay tunes,
While, an embodied music, moves your step,
Your free, wild, springy step, like Atala's,
Or Pocahontas, careless child o' the sun —
Those Indian beauties I compare you to —
I, still your praiser, —
Nay, nay, I 'll not praise,
Fair seemeth fairest, ignorant 't is fair:
That light incredulous laugh is worth a world!
That laugh, with childish echoes.
So then, fade,
Mere dream. Come, true and sweet reality:

Come, dawn of happy wifehood, motherhood,
Ripening to perfect noon! Come, peaceful round
Of simple joys, fond duties, gladsome cares,
When each full hour drops bliss with liberal hand,
Yet leaves to-morrow richer than to-day.

Will you sit here? the grass is summer-warm.
Look at those children making daisy-chains,
So did we too, do you mind? That eldest lad,
He has your very mouth. Yet, you will have 't
His eyes are like his father's? Perhaps so:
They could not be more dark and deep and kind.
Do you know, this hour I have been fancying you
A poet's dream, and almost sighed to think
There was no poet to praise you —
Why, you 're flown
After those mad elves in the flower-beds there,
Ha — ha — you 're no dream now.
Well, well — so best!
My eyelids droop content o'er moistened eyes:
I would not have you other than you are.

## LEONORA.

EONORA, Leonora,
How the word rolls — *Leonora* —
Lion-like, in full-mouthed sound,
Marching o'er the metric ground
With a tawny tread sublime —
So your name moves, Leonora,
Down my desert rhyme.

So you pace, young Leonora,
Through the alleys of the wood,
Head erect, majestic, tall,
The fit daughter of the Hall:
Yet with hazel eyes declined,
And a voice like summer wind,
And a meek mouth, sweet and good,
Dimpling ever, Leonora,
In fair womanhood.

How those smiles dance, Leonora,
As you meet the pleasant breeze
Under your ancestral trees:
For your heart is free and pure
As this blue March sky o'erhead,
And in the life-path you tread,

All the leaves are budding, sure,
All the primroses are springing,
All the birds begin their singing —
'T is your spring-time, Leonora,
May it long endure.

But it *will* pass, Leonora:
And the silent days must fall
When a change comes over all:
When the last leaf downward flitters,
And the last, last sunbeam glitters
On the terraced hillside cool,
On the peacocks by the pool:
When you 'll walk along these alleys
With no lightsome foot that dallies
With the violets and the moss, —
But with quiet steps and slow,
And grave eyes that earthward grow,
And a matron-heart inured
To all women have endured, —
Must endure and ever will,
All the joy and all the ill,
All the gain and all the loss —
Can you cheerfully lay down
Careless girlhood's flowery crown,
And thus take up, Leonora,
Womanhood's meek cross?

Ay! your eyes shine, Leonora,
Warm, and true, and brave, and kind:
And although I nothing know
Of the maiden heart below,
I in them good omens find.
Go, enjoy your present hours
Like the birds and bees and flowers:
And may summer days bestow
On you just so much of rain,
Blessed baptism of pain!
As will make your blossoms grow.
May you walk, as through life's road
Every noble woman can, —
With a pure heart before God,
And a true heart unto man:
Till with this same smile you wait
For the opening of the Gate
That shuts earth from mortal eyes;
Till at last, with peaceful heart,
All contented to depart,
Leaving children's children playing
In these woods you used to stray in,
You may enter, Leonora,
Into Paradise.

## PLIGHTED.

MINE to the core of the heart, my beauty!
Mine, all mine, and for love, not duty:
Love given willingly, full and free,
Love for love's sake — as mine to thee.
Duty 's a slave that keeps the keys,
But Love, the master, goes in and out
Of his goodly chambers with song and shout,
Just as he please — just as he please.

Mine, from the dear head's crown, brown-golden,
To the silken foot that 's scarce beholden;
Give to a few friends hand or smile,
Like a generous lady, now and awhile,
But the sanctuary heart, that none dare win,
Keep holiest of holiest evermore;
The crowd in the aisles may watch the door,
The high-priest only enters in.

Mine, my own, without doubts or terrors,
With all thy goodnesses, all thy errors,
Unto me and to me alone revealed,
"A spring shut up, a fountain sealed."
Many may praise thee — praise mine as thine,

Many may love thee — I 'll love them too ;
But thy heart of hearts, pure, faithful, and true,
Must be mine, mine wholly, and only mine.

Mine! — God, I thank Thee that Thou hast given
Something all mine on this side heaven :
Something as much myself to be
As this my soul which I lift to Thee :
Flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone,
Life of my life, whom Thou dost make
Two to the world for the world's work's sake —
But each unto each, as in Thy sight, *one.*

## MORTALITY.

"And we shall be changed."

E dainty mosses, lichens gray,
Pressed each to each in tender fold,
And peacefully thus, day by day,
Returning to their mould ;

Brown leaves, that with aerial grace
Slip from your branch like birds a-wing,
Each leaving in the appointed place
Its bud of future spring ; —

If we, God's conscious creatures, knew
  But half your faith in our decay,
We should not tremble as we do
  When summoned clay to clay.

But with an equal patience sweet
  We should put off this mortal gear,
In whatsoe'er new form is meet
  Content to reappear.

Knowing each germ of life He gives
  Must have in Him its source and rise,
Being that of His being lives
  May change, but never dies.

Ye dead leaves, dropping soft and slow,
  Ye mosses green and lichens fair,
Go to your graves, as I will go,
  For God is also there.

## LIFE RETURNING.

After War-time.

LIFE, dear life, with sunbeam finger touching
This poor damp brow, or flying freshly by
On wings of mountain wind, or tenderly
In links of visionary embraces clutching
Me from the yawning grave —
Can I believe thou yet hast power to save?

I see thee, O my life, like phantom giant
Stand on the hill-top, large against the dawn,
Upon the night-black clouds a picture drawn
Of aspect wonderful, with hope defiant,
And so majestic grown
I scarce discern the image as my own.

Those mists furl off, and through the vale resplendent
I see the pathway of my years prolong:
Not without labor, yet for labor strong:
Not without pain, but pain whose touch transcendent

By love's divinest laws
Heart unto heart, and all hearts upwards, draws.

O life, O love, your diverse tones bewildering
Make silence, like two meeting waves of sound;
I dream of wifely white arms, lisp of children —
Never of ended wars,
Save kisses sealing honorable scars.

No more of battles! save the combat glorious
To which all earth and heaven may witness stand;
The sword of the Spirit taking in my hand
I shall go forth, since in new fields victorious
The King yet grants that I
His servant live, or His good soldier die.

## MY FRIEND.

MY Friend wears a cheerful smile of his own,
And a musical tongue has he;
We sit and look in each other's face,
And are very good company.
A heart he has, full warm and red
As ever a heart I see;

And as long as I keep true to him,
Why, he 'll keep true to me.

When the wind blows high and the snow falls fast
And we hear the wassailers' roar —
My Friend and I, with a right good-will
We bolt the chamber door:
I smile at him and he smiles at me
In a dreamy calm profound,
Till his heart leaps up in the midst of him
With a comfortable sound.

His warm breath kisses my thin gray hair
And reddens my ashen cheeks;
He knows me better than you all know,
Though never a word he speaks: —
Knows me as well as some had known
Were things — not as things be.
But hey, what matters? my Friend and I
Are capital company.

At dead of night, when the house is still,
He opens his pictures fair:
Faces that are, that used to be,
And faces that never were:
My wife sits sewing beside my hearth,
My little ones frolic wild,
Though — Lillian 's married these twenty years,
And I never had a child.

But hey, what matters? when those who laugh
May weep to-morrow, and they
Who weep be as those that wept not — all
Their tears long wiped away.
I shall burn out, like you, my Friend,
With a bright warm heart and bold,
That flickers up to the last — then drops
Into quiet ashes cold.

And when you flicker on me, old Friend,
In the old man's elbow-chair,
Or — something easier still, where we
Lie down, to arise up fair
And young, and happy — why then, my Friend,
Should other friends ask of me,
Tell them I lived and loved and died
In the best of all company.

## A VALENTINE.

E are twa laddies unco gleg,
An' blithe an' bonnie:
As licht o' heel as Anster's Meg; —
Gin ye 'd a lassie's favor beg,
I' faith she couldna stir a peg
Ance lookin' on ye!

He 's a douce wiselike callant — Jim :
Of wit aye ready.
Cuts aff ane's sentence, 't ither's limb,
An' whiles he 's daft and whiles he 's grim,
But brains ? — wha 's got the like o' him
In 's wee bit heidie ?

Dear laddie wi' the curlin' hair,
Gentlest of ony :
That gies kind looks an' speeches fair
To dour auld wives as lassies rare, —
I ken a score o' lads an' mair,
But nane like Johnnie !

And gin ye learn the way to woo,
Hae sweethearts mony,
O laddie, never say ye loe
An' gie fause coin for siller true ;
A lassie's sair heart 's naething new, —
Mind o' that, Johnnie.

An' dinna change your luve sae fast
For ilk face bonnie,
Lest waefu' want track wilfu' waste,
And a' your youthfu' years lang past,
Ye get the crookit stick at last,
Ochone, puir Johnnie !

But callants baith, tak tent, and when
  Bright e'en hae won ye,
Tak each your jo — and keep her — then
Be faithfu' as ye 're fond, ye ken,
Or — gang your gate like honest men,
  Young Jim and Johnnie.

Sae when auld Time his crookit claw
  Sall lay upon ye,
When, Jim, your feet that dance sae braw
Are no the lightest in the ha',
An' a' your curly haffets fa',
  My winsome Johnnie, —

May each his ain warm ingle view,
  Cosie as ony:
A gudewife sonsie, leal and true,
O' bonnie dochters not a few,
An' lads — sic lads as ye 're the noo —
  Dear Jim and Johnnie!

## GRACE OF CLYDESIDE.

AH, little Grace of the golden locks,
The hills rise fair on the shores of Clyde.
As the merry waves wear out these rocks
She wears my heart out, glides past and mocks:
But heaven's gate ever stands open wide.

The boat goes softly along, along,
Like a river of life glows the amber Clyde;
Her voice floats near me like angels' song, —
Ah, sweet love-death, but thy pangs are strong!
Though heaven's gate ever stands open wide.

We walk by the shore and the stars shine bright,
But coldly, above the solemn Clyde:
Her arm touches mine — her laugh rings light —
One hears my silence: His merciful night
Hides me — *Can* heaven be open wide?

I ever was but a dreamer, Grace:
As the gray hills watch o'er the sunny Clyde,
Standing afar, each in his place,
I watch your young life's beautiful race,
Apart — until heaven be opened wide.

And sometimes when in the twilight balm
  The hills grow purple along the Clyde,
The waves flow softly and very calm,
I hear all nature sing this one psalm,
  That "heaven's gate ever stands open wide."

So, happy Grace, with your spirit free,
  Laugh on! life is sweet on the banks of Clyde;
This is no blame unto thee or me;
Only God saw it could not be,
  Therefore His heaven stands open wide.

## TO A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN.

"A daughter of the gods: divinely tall,
And most divinely fair."

URELY, dame Nature made you in some dream
Of old-world women — Chriemhild, or bright
Aslauga, or Boadicea fierce and fair,
Or Berengaria as she rose, her lips
Yet ruddy from the poison that anoints
Her memory still, the queen of queenly wives.

I marvel, who will crown you wife, you grand
And goodly creature! who will mount supreme
The empty chariot of your maiden heart,
Curb the strong will that leaps and foams and chafes
Still masterless, and guide you safely home
Unto the golden gate, where quiet sits
Grave Matronhood, with gracious, loving eyes.

What eyes you have, you wild gazelle o' the plain,
You fierce hind of the forest! now they flash,
Now glow, now in their own dark down-dropt shade
Conceal themselves a moment, as some thought,
Too brief to be a feeling, flits across
The April cloudland of your careless soul —
There — that light laugh — and 't is full sun —
full day.

Would I could paint you, line by line, ere Time
Touches the gorgeous picture! your ripe mouth,
Your white arched throat, your stature like to Saul's
Among his brethren, yet so fitly framed
In such harmonious symmetry, we say
As of a cedar among common trees
Never "How tall!" but only "O how fair!"

*Who* made you fair? moulded you in the shape
That poets dream of; sent you forth to men
His caligraph inscribed on every curve
Of your brave form?

Is it written on your soul?
— I know not.
Woman, upon whom is laid
Heaven's own sign-manual, Beauty, mock heaven not!
Reverence thy loveliness — the outward type
Of things we understand not, nor behold
But as in a glass, darkly; wear it thou
With awful gladness, grave humility,
That not contemns, nor boasts, nor is ashamed,
But lifts its face up prayerfully to heaven, —
"Thou who hast made me, make me worthy Thee!"

## MARY'S WEDDING.

**February 25th, 1851.**

OU are to be married, Mary;
This hour as I wakeful lie
In the dreamy dawn of the morning,
Your wedding hour draws nigh;
Miles off, you are rising, dressing,
Your bridemaidens gay among,
In the same old house we played in, —
You and I, when we were young.

Your bridemaids — they were our playmates:
Those known rooms, every wall,
Could speak of our childish frolics,
Loves, jealousies, great and small:
Do you mind how pansies changed we
And smiled at the word "forget"? —
'T was a girl's romance: yet somehow
I have kept my pansy yet.

Do you mind our poems written
Together? our dreams of fame —
And of love — how we 'd share all secrets
When that sweet mystery came?
It is no mystery now, Mary;
It was unveiled, year by year,
Till — this is your marriage morning;
And I rest quiet here.

I cannot call up your face, Mary,
The face of the bride to-day:
You have outgrown my knowledge,
The years have so slipped away.
I see but your girlish likeness,
Brown eyes and brown falling hair; —
God knows, I did love you dearly,
And was proud that you were fair.

Many speak my name, Mary,
While yours in home's silence lies:

The future I read in toil's guerdon,
You will read in your children's eyes:
The past — the same past with either —
Is to you a delightsome scene,
But I cannot trace it clearly
For the graves that rise between.

I am glad you are happy, Mary!
These tears, could you see them fall,
Would show, though you have forgotten,
I have remembered all.
And though my cup may be empty
While yours is all running o'er,
Heaven keep you its sweetness, Mary,
Brimming for evermore.

## BETWEEN TWO WORLDS.

Parting for Australia.

HERE sitting by the fire
I aspire, love, I aspire —
Not to that "other world" of your fond dreams,
But one as nigh and nigher,
Compared to which your real, unreal seems.

Together as to-night
In our light, love, in our light
Of reunited joy appears no shade:
From this our hope's reached height
All things are possible and level made.

Therefore we sit and view —
I and you, love, I and you —
That wondrous valley o'er southern seas,
Where in a country new
You will make for me a sweet nest of ease;

Where I, your poor tired bird,
(Nothing stirred? Love, nothing stirred?)
May fold her wings and be no more distrest:
Where troubles may be heard
Like outside winds at night which deepen rest.

Where in green pastures wide
We 'll abide, love, we 'll abide,
And keep content our patriarchal flocks,
Till at our aged side
Leap our young brown-faced shepherds of the rocks.

Ah, tale that 's easy told!
(Hold my hand, love, tighter hold.)
What if this face of mine, which *you* think fair —
If it should ne'er grow old,
Nor matron cap cover this maiden hair?

What if this silver ring
(Loose it clings, love, yet does cling:)
Should ne'er be changed for any other? nay,
This very hand I fling
About your neck should — Hush! to-day 's to-day:

To-morrow is — ah, whose?
You 'll not lose, love, you 'll not lose
This hand I pledged, if never a wife's hand
For tender household use
Led by yours fearless into a far, far land.

Kiss me and do not grieve;
I believe, love, I believe
That He who holds the measure of our days,
And did thus strangely weave
Our opposite lives together, to His praise —

He never will divide
Us so wide, love, us so wide:
But will, whate'er befalls us, clearly show
That those in Him allied
In life or death are nearer than they know.

## COUSIN ROBERT.

COUSIN Robert, far away
Among the lands of gold,
How many years since we two met? —
You would not like it told.

O cousin Robert, buried deep
Amid your bags of gold —
I thought I saw you yesternight
Just as you were of old.

You own whole leagues — I half a rood
Behind my cottage door;
You have your lacs of gold rupees,
And I my children four;

Your tall barques dot the dangerous seas,
My "ship 's come home" — to rest
Safe anchored from the storms of life
Upon one faithful breast.

And it would cause no start or sigh,
Nor thought of doubt or blame,
If I should teach our little son
His cousin Robert's name. —

That name, however wide it rings,
I oft think, when alone,
I rather would have seen it graved
Upon a churchyard stone —

Upon the white sunshining stone
Where cousin Alick lies:
Ah, sometimes, woe to him that lives!
Happy is he that dies!

O Robert, Robert, many a tear —
Though not the tears of old —
Drops, thinking of your face last night
Your hand's remembered fold;

A young man's face, so like, so like
Our mothers' faces fair:
A young man's hand, so firm to clasp,
So resolute to dare.

I thought you good — I wished you great;
You were my hope, my pride:
To know you good, to make you great
I once had happy died.

To tear the plague-spot from your heart,
Place honor on your brow,
See old age come in crownèd peace —
I almost would die now!

Would give — all that 's now mine to give —
To have you sitting there,
The cousin Robert of my youth —
Though beggar'd, with gray hair.

O Robert, Robert, some that live
Are dead, long ere they are old;
Better the pure heart of our youth
Than palaces of gold;

Better the blind faith of our youth
Than doubt, which all truth braves;
Better to mourn, God's children dear,
Than laugh, the Devil's slaves.

O Robert, Robert, life is sweet,
And love is boundless gain:
Yet if I mind of you, my heart
Is stabbed with sudden pain:

And as in peace this Christmas eve
I close our quiet doors,
And kiss "good-night" on sleeping heads —
Such bonnie curls, — like yours:

I fall upon my bended knees
With sobs that choke each word; —
"*On those who err and are deceived*
*Have mercy, O good* LORD!"

## AT LAST.

DOWN, down like a pale leaf dropping
Under an autumn sky,
My love dropped into my bosom
Quietly, quietly.

There was not a ray of sunshine
And not a sound in the air,
As she trembled into my bosom —
My love, no longer fair.

All year round in her beauty
She dwelt on the tree-top high:
She danced in the summer breezes,
She laughed to the summer sky.

I lay so low in the grass-dews,
She sat so high above,
She never wist of my longing,
She never dreamed of my love.

But when winds laid bare her dwelling,
And her heart could find no rest,
I called — and she fluttered downward
Into my faithful breast.

I know that my love is fading;
I know I cannot fold
Her fragrance from the frost-blight,
Her beauty from the mould:

But a little, little longer
She shall contented lie,
And wither away in the sunshine
Silently, silently.

Come when thou wilt, grim Winter,
My year is crowned and blest
If when my love is dying
She die upon my breast.

## THE AURORA ON THE CLYDE.

September, 1850.

H me, how heavily the night comes down,
Heavily, heavily:
Fade the curved shores, the blue hills' serried throng,
The darkening waves we oared in light and song:
Joy melts from us as sunshine from the sky;
And Patience with sad eye
Takes up her staff and drops her withered crown.

Our small boat heaves upon the heaving river,
Wearily, wearily:
The flickering shore-lights come and go by fits;
Towering 'twixt earth and heaven dusk silence sits,
Death at her feet; above, infinity;
Between, slow drifting by,
Our tiny boat, like life, floats onward ever.

Pale, mournful hour, — too early night that falls
Drearily, drearily,
Come not so soon! Return, return, bright day,
Kind voices, smiles, blue mountains, sunny bay!
In vain! Life's dial cannot backward fly:
The dark time comes. Low lie,
And listen, soul. Oft in the night, God calls.

* * * * *

Light, light on the black river! How it gleams,
Solemnly, solemnly!
Like troops of pale ghosts on their pensive march,
Treading the far heavens in a luminous arch,
Each after each: phantasms serene and high
From that eternity
Where all earth's sharpest woes grow dim as dreams.

Let us drink in the glory, full and whole,
Silently, silently:
Gaze, till it lulls all pain, all vain desires: —

See now, that radiant bow of pillared fires
Spanning the hills like dawn, until they lie
In soft tranquillity,
And all night's ghastly glooms asunder roll.

Look, look again! the vision changes fast,
Gloriously, gloriously:
That was heaven's gate with its illumined road,
But this *is* heaven; the very throne of God
Hung with flame curtains of celestial dye
Waving perpetually,
While to and fro innumerous angels haste.

I see no more the stream, the boat that moves
Mournfully, mournfully:
And we who sit, poor prisoners of clay:
It is not night, it is immortal day,
Where the One Presence fills eternity,
And each, His servant high,
Forever praises and forever loves.

O soul, forget the weight that drags thee down
Deathfully, deathfully:
Know thyself. As this glory wraps thee round,
Let it melt off the chains that long have bound
Thy strength. Stand free before thy God and cry—
"My Father, here am I:
Give to me as Thou wilt—first cross, then crown."

## AN AURORA BOREALIS.

Roslin Castle.

STRANGE soft gleam, O ghostly dawn
That never brightens unto day;
Ere earth's mirk pale once more be drawn
Let us look out beyond the gray.

It is just midnight by the clock —
There is no sound on glen or hill,
The moaning linn adown its rock
Leaps, but the woods lie dark and still.

Austere against the kindling sky
Yon broken turret blacker grows;
Harsh light, to show remorselessly
Ruins night hid in kind repose!

Nay, beauteous light, nay, light that fills
The whole heaven like a dream of morn,
As waking upon northern hills
She smiles to find herself new-born, —

Strange light, I know thou wilt not stay,
That many an hour must come and go

Before the pale November day
Break in the east, forlorn and slow.

Yet blest one gleam — one gleam like this,
When all heaven brightens in our sight,
And the long night that was and is
And shall be, vanishes in light:

O blest one hour like this! to rise
And see grief's shadows backward roll;
While bursts on unaccustomed eyes
The glad Aurora of the soul.

## AT THE LINN-SIDE.

Roslin.

LIVING, living water,
So busy and so bright,
Aye flashing in the morning beams,
And sounding through the night;
O golden-shining water —
Would God that I might be
A vocal message from His mouth
Into the world, like thee!

O merry, merry water,
Which nothing e'er affrays;
And as it pours from rock to rock
Nothing e'er stops or stays;
But past cool heathery hollows
And gloomy pools it flows;
Past crags that fain would shut it in
Leaps through — and on it goes.

O fresh'ning, sparkling water,
O voice that 's never still,
Though winter lays her dead-white hand
On brae and glen and hill;
Though no leaf 's left to flutter
In woods all mute and hoar,
Yet thou, O river, night and day
Thou runnest evermore.

No foul thing can pollute thee;
Thy swiftness casts aside
All ill, like a good heart and true,
However sorely tried.
O living, living water,
So fresh and bright and free —
God lead us through this changeful world
Forever pure, like thee!

## A HYMN FOR CHRISTMAS MORNING.

1855.

IT is the Christmas time:
And up and down 'twixt heaven and earth,
In glorious grief and solemn mirth,
The shining angels climb.

And unto everything
That lives and moves, for heaven, on earth,
With equal share of grief and mirth,
The shining angels sing: —

"Babes new-born, undefiled,
In lowly hut, or mansion wide —
Sleep safely through this Christmas-tide
When Jesus was a child.

"O young men, bold and free,
In peopled town, or desert grim,
When ye are tempted like to Him,
'The man Christ Jesus' see.

"Poor mothers, with your hoard
Of endless love and countless pain —

Remember all her grief, her gain,
The Mother of the Lord.

"Mourners, half blind with woe,
Look up! One standeth in this place,
And by the pity of His face
The Man of Sorrows know.

"Wanderers in far countrie,
O think of Him who came, forgot,
To His own, and they received Him not—
Jesus of Galilee.

"O all ye who have trod
The wine-press of affliction, lay
Your hearts before His heart this day—
Behold the Christ of God!"

## A PSALM FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE.

1855.

FRIEND stands at the door;
In either tight-closed hand
Hiding rich gifts, three hundred and three score:
Waiting to strew them daily o'er the land
Even as seed the sower.
Each drops he, treads it in and passes by:
It cannot be made fruitful till it die.

O good New Year, we clasp
This warm shut hand of thine,
Loosing forever, with half sigh, half gasp,
That which from ours falls like dead fingers' twine:
Ay, whether fierce its grasp
Has been, or gentle, having been, we know
That it was blessed: let the Old Year go.

O New Year, teach us faith!
The road of life is hard:
When our feet bleed and scourging winds us scathe,
Point thou to Him whose visage was more marred
Than any man's: who saith

"Make straight paths for your feet" — and to the
oppress —
"Come ye to Me, and I will give you rest."

Yet hang some lamp-like hope
Above this unknown way,
Kind year, to give our spirits freer scope
And our hands strength to work while it is day.
But if that way must slope
Tombward, O bring before our fading eyes
The lamp of life, the Hope that never dies.

Comfort our souls with love, —
Love of all human kind;
Love special, close — in which like sheltered dove
Each weary heart its own safe nest may find;
And love that turns above
Adoringly; contented to resign
All loves, if need be, for the Love Divine.

Friend, come thou like a friend,
And whether bright thy face,
Or dim with clouds we cannot comprehend, —
We 'll hold out patient hands, each in his place,
And trust thee to the end.
Knowing thou leadest onwards to those spheres
Where there are neither days nor months nor years.

## FAITHFUL IN VANITY-FAIR.

Suggested by one of David Scott's illustrations of "Pilgrim's Progress."

### I.

THE great human whirlpool — 't is seething and seething:
On! No time for shrieking out — scarcely for breathing:
All toiling and moiling, some feebler, some bolder,
But each sees a fiend-face grim over his shoulder:
Thus merrily live they in Vanity-fair.

The great human caldron — it boils ever higher:
Some drowning, some sinking; while some, stealing nigher
Athirst, come and lean o'er its outermost verges,
Or touch, as a child's feet touch, timorous, the surges —
One plunge — lo! more souls swamped in Vanity-fair.

Let 's live while we live; for to-morrow all 's over:
Drink deep, drunkard bold; and kiss close, maddened lover;

Smile, hypocrite, smile; it is no such hard labor,
While each stealthy hand stabs the heart of his neighbor —
Faugh! Fear not: we 've *no* hearts in Vanity-fair.

The mad crowd divides and then soon closes after:
Afar towers the pyre. Through the shouting and laughter
"What new sport is this?" gasps a reveller, half turning. —
"One Faithful, meek fool, who is led to the burning,
He cumbered us sorely in Vanity-fair.

"A dreamer, who held every man for a brother;
A coward, who, smit on one cheek, gave the other;
A fool, whose blind soul took as truth all our lying,
Too simple to live, so best fitted for dying:
Sure, such are best swept out of Vanity-fair."

## II.

Silence! though the flames arise and quiver:
Silence! though the crowd howls on forever:
Silence! Through this fiery purgatory
God is leading up a soul to glory.

See, the white lips with no moans are trembling,
Hate of foes or plaint of friends' dissembling;
If sighs come — his patient prayers outlive them,
"*Lord — these know not what they do. Forgive them!*"

Thirstier still the roaring flames are glowing;
Fainter in his ear the laughter growing;
Brief will last the fierce and fiery trial,
Angel welcomes drown the earth denial.

Now the amorous death-fires, gleaming ruddy,
Clasp him close. Down drops the quivering body,
While through harmless flames ecstatic flying
Shoots the beauteous soul. This, this is *dying.*

Lo, the opening sky with splendor rifted,
Lo, the palm-branch for his hands uplifted:
Lo, the immortal chariot, cloud-descending,
And its legioned angels close attending.

Let his poor dust mingle with the embers
While the crowds sweep on and none remembers:
Saints unnumbered through the Infinite Glory,
Praising God, recount the martyr's story.

## HER LIKENESS.

A GIRL, who has so many wilful ways
She would have caused Job's patience to forsake him;
Yet is so rich in all that 's girlhood's praise,
Did Job himself upon her goodness gaze,
A little better she would surely make him.

Yet is this girl I sing in naught uncommon,
And very far from angel yet, I trow.
Her faults, her sweetnesses, are purely human;
Yet she 's more lovable as simple woman
Than any one diviner that I know.

Therefore I wish that she may safely keep
This womanhede, and change not, only grow;
From maid to matron, youth to age, may creep,
And in perennial blessedness, still reap
On every hand of that which she doth sow.

## ONLY A DREAM.

"I waked — she fled: and day brought back my night."

ETHOUGHT I saw thee yesternight
Sit by me in the olden guise,
The white robes and the palm foregone,
Weaving instead of amaranth crown
A web of mortal dyes.

I cried, "Where hast thou been so long?"
(The mild eyes turned and mutely smiled:)
"Why dwellest thou in far-off lands?
What is that web within thy hands?"
— "I work for thee, my child."

I clasped thee in my arms and wept;
I kissed thee oft with passion wild:
I poured fond questions, tender blame;
Still thy sole answer was the same, —
"I work for thee, my child."

"Come and walk with me as of old."
Then camest thou, silent as before;
We passed along that churchyard way
We used to tread each Sabbath day,
Till one trod earth no more.

I felt thy hand upon my arm,
  Beside me thy meek face I saw,
Yet through the sweet familiar grace
A something spiritual could trace
  That left a nameless awe.

Trembling I said, "Long years have passed
  Since thou wert from my side beguiled;
Now thou 'rt returned and all shall be
As was before." — Half-pensively
  Thou answered'st — "Nay, my child."

I pleaded sore: "Hadst thou forgot
  The love wherewith we loved of old, —
The long sweet days of converse blest,
The nights of slumber on thy breast, —
  Wert thou to me grown cold?"

There beamed on me those eyes of heaven
  That wept no more, but ever smiled;
"Love only *is* love in that Home
Where I abide — where, till thou come,
  I work for thee, my child."

If from my sight thou passedst then,
  Or if my sobs the dream exiled,
I know not: but in memory clear
I seem these strange words still to hear,
  "*I work for thee, my child.*"

## TO MY GODCHILD ALICE.

ALICE, Alice, little Alice,
My new-christened baby Alice,
Can there ever rhymes be found
To express my wishes for thee
In a silvery flowing, worthy
Of that silvery sound?
Bonnie Alice, Lady Alice,
Sure, this sweetest name must be
A true omen to thee, Alice,
Of a life's long melody.

Alice, Alice, little Alice,
Mayst thou prove a golden chalice,
Filled with holiness like wine:
With rich blessings running o'er
Yet replenished evermore
From a fount divine:
Alice, Alice, little Alice,
When this future comes to thee,
In thy young life's brimming chalice
Keep some drops of balm for me!

Alice, Alice, little Alice,
Mayst thou grow a goodly palace,

Fitly framed from roof to floors,
Pure unto the inmost centre,
While high thoughts like angels enter
At the open doors:
Alice, Alice, little Alice,
When this beauteous sight I see,
In thy woman-heart's wide palace
Keep one nook of love for me.

Alice, Alice, little Alice, —
Sure the verse halts out of malice
To the thoughts it feebly bears,
And thy name's soft echoes, ranging
From quaint rhyme to rhyme, are changing
Into silent prayers.
God be with thee, little Alice,
Of His bounteousness may He
Fill the chalice, build the palace,
Here, unto eternity!

# EIGHTEEN SONNETS.

## RESIGNING.

"Poor heart, what bitter words we speak
When God speaks of resigning!"

CHILDREN, that lay their pretty garlands by
So piteously, yet with a humble mind;
Sailors, who, when their ship rocks in the wind,
Cast out her freight with half-averted eye,
Riches for life exchanging solemnly,
Lest they should never gain the wished-for shore;—
Thus we, O Father, standing Thee before,
Do lay down at Thy feet without a sigh
Each after each our precious things and rare,
Our dear heart-jewels and our garlands fair.
Perhaps Thou knewest that the flowers would die,
And the long-voyaged hoards be found but dust:
So took'st them, while unchanged. To Thee we trust
For incorruptible treasure: Thou art just.

## SAINT ELIZABETH OF BOHEMIA.

"Would that we two were lying
Beneath the churchyard sod,
With our limbs at rest in the green earth's breast,
And our souls at home with God."
KINGSLEY'S *Saint's Tragedy.*

### I.

NEVER lay me down to sleep at night
But in my heart I sing that little song:
The angels hear it as, a pitying throng,
They touch my burning lids with fingers bright
As moonbeams, pale, impalpable, and light:
And when my daily pious tasks are done,
And all my patient prayers said one by one,
God hears it. Seems it sinful in His sight
That round my slow burnt-offering of quenched will
One quivering human sigh creeps wind-like still?
That when my orisons celestial fail
Rises one note of natural human wail?
Dear lord, spouse, hero, martyr, saint! erelong,
I trust, God will forgive my singing that poor song.

## II.

A YEAR ago I bade my little son
Bear upon pilgrimage a heavy load
Of alms; he cried, half-fainting on the road,
"Mother, O mother, would the day were done!"
Him I reproved with tears, and said, "Go on!
Nor pause nor murmur till thy task be o'er." —
Would not God say to me the same, and more?
I will not sing that song. Thou, dearest one,
Husband — no, brother! — stretch thy steadfast hand
And let mine grasp it. Now, I also stand,
My woman weakness nerved to strength like thine;
We 'll quaff life's aloe-cup as if 't were wine
Each to the other; journeying on apart,
Till at heaven's golden doors we two leap heart to heart.

## A MARRIAGE-TABLE.

W. H. L. and F. R.

HERE was a marriage-table where One sate,
Haply, unnoticed, till they craved His aid:
Thenceforward does it seem that He has made
All virtuous marriage-tables consecrate:
And so, at this, where without pomp or state
We sit, and only say, or mute, are fain
To wish the simple words "God bless these twain!"
I think that He who "in the midst" doth wait
Oft-times, would not abjure our prayerful cheer,
But, as at Cana, list with gracious ear
To us, beseeching, that the Love divine
May ever at their household table sit,
Make all His servants who encompass it,
And change life's bitterest waters into wine.

## MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL.

A Statuette.

### I.

MY white archangel, with thy steadfast eyes
Beholding all this empty ghost-filled room,
Thy clasped hands resting on the sword of doom,
Thy firm, close lips, not made for human sighs
Or smiles, or kisses sweet, or bitter cries,
But for divine exhorting, holy song
And righteous counsel, bold from seraph tongue.
Beautiful angel, strong as thou art wise,
Would that the sight of thee made wise and strong!
Would that this sheathèd sword of thine, which lies
Stonily idle, could gleam out among
The spiritual hosts of enemies
That tempting shriek — "Requite thou wrong with wrong."
Lama Sabachthani, — How long, how long.

## II.

MICHAEL, the leader of the hosts of God,
Who warred with Satan for the body of him
Whom, living, God had loved — If cherubim
With cherubim contended for one clod
Of human dust, for forty years that trod
The gloomy desert of Heaven's chastisement,
Are there not ministering angels sent
To battle with the devils that roam abroad,
Clutching our living souls? "The living, still
The living, they shall praise Thee!" — Let some great
Invisible spirit enter in and fill
The howling chambers of hearts desolate;
With looks like thine, O Michael, strong and wise,
My white archangel with the steadfast eyes.

## I.

## BEATRICE TO DANTE.

"Guardami ben. Ben son, ben son." *

EGARD me well: I am thy love, thy love;
Thy blessing, thy delight, thy hope, thy peace:
Thy joy above all joys that break and cease
When their full waves in widest circles move:
Thy bird of comfort, thine eternal dove,
Whom thou didst send out of thy mournful breast
To flutter back and point thee to thy rest:
Thine angel, who forgets her crown star-wove
To come to thee with folded woman-hands
Pleading, — "Look on me, Beatrice, who stands
Before thee; by the Triune Light divine
Undazzled, still beholds thy human face,
And is more happy in this happy place
That thou alone art hers and she is thine."

* Suggested by a statue of Beatrice, bearing this motto.

## DANTE TO BEATRICE.

### II.

I SEE thee, gliding towards me with slow pace
Across the azure fields of Paradise,
Where thine each footstep makes a star arise.
So from this heart's once void but infinite space
Each strange sweet touch of thy celestial grace
In the old mortal life, struck out some spark
To light the world, though all my heaven lay dark.
O Beatrice, cypresses enlace
My laurels: none have grown save tear-bedewed —
Salt tears that sank into the earth unviewed,
And sprang up green to form a crown of bays.
Take it! At thy dear feet I lay my all,
What men my honors, virtues, glories, call:
I lived, loved, suffered, sung — for thy sole praise.

## A QUESTION.

### I.

OUL, spirit, genius — which thou art — that whence
I know not, rose upon this mortal frame
Like the sun o'er the mountains, all aflame,
Seen large through mists of childish innocence,
And year by year with me uptravelling thence,
As hour by hour the day-star, madest aspire
My nature, interpenetrate with fire
It felt but understood not — strong, intense,
Wisdom with folly mixed, and gold with clay; —
Soul, thou hast journeyed with me all this way.
Oft hidden and o'erclouded, oft arrayed
In scorching splendors that my earth-life burned,
Yet ever unto thee my true life turned,
For, dim, or clear, 't was thou my daylight made.

## II.

Soul, dwelling oft in God's infinitude,
And sometimes seeming no more part of me —
This *me*, worms' heritage — than that sun can be
Part of the earth he has with warmth imbued, —
Whence camest thou? whither goest thou? I,
subdued
With awe of mine own being — thus sit still,
Dumb, on the summit of this lonely hill,
Whose dry November-grasses dew-bestrewed
Mirror a million suns — That sun, so bright,
Passes, as thou must pass, Soul, into night:
Art thou afraid, who solitary hast trod
A path I know not, from a source to a bourne,
Both which I know not? fear'st thou to return
Alone, even as thou camest, *alone*, to God?

## ANGEL FACES.

"And with the dawn those angel faces smile
That I have loved long since, and lost awhile."

### I.

SHALL not paint them. God them sees, and I:
No other can, nor need. They have no form,
I may not close with human kisses warm
Their eyes which shine afar or from on high,
But never will shine nearer till I die.
How long, how long! See, I am growing old;
I have quite ceased to note in my hair's fold
The silver threads that there in ambush lie;
Some angel faces bent from heaven would pine
To trace the sharp lines graven upon mine;
What matter? in the wrinkles ploughed by care
Let age tread after, sowing immortal seeds;
All this life's harvest yielded, wheat or weeds,
Is reaped, methinks: at last my little field lies bare.

## II.

But in the night time, 'twixt it and the stars,
The angel faces still come glimmering by ;
No death-pale shadow, no averted eye
Marking the inevitable doom that bars
Me from them. Not a cloud their aspect mars ;
And my sick spirit walks with them hand in hand
By the cool waters of a pleasant land :
Sings with them o'er again, without its jars,
The psalm of life, that ceased, as one by one
Their voices, dropping off, left mine alone
With dull monotonous wail to grieve the air.
O solitary love, that art so strong,
I think God will have pity on thee erelong,
And take thee where thou 'lt find those angel faces fair.

## SUNDAY MORNING BELLS.

ROM the near city comes the clang of bells :
Their hundred jarring diverse tones combine
In one faint misty harmony, as fine
As the soft note yon winter robin swells. —
What if to Thee in Thine Infinity
These multiform and many-colored creeds
Seem but the robe man wraps as masquers' weeds
Round the one living truth Thou givest him — Thee ?
What if these varied forms that worship prove,
Being heart-worship, reach Thy perfect ear
But as a monotone, complete and clear,
Of which the music is, through Christ's name, Love ?
Forever rising in sublime increase
To " Glory in the Highest, — on earth peace ? "

## CŒUR DE LION:

**Marochetti's Statue in the Great Exhibition of 1851.**

### I.

ICHARD the Lion-hearted, crowned serene
With the true royalty of perfect man;
Seated in stone above the praise or ban
Of these mixed crowds who come and gaping lean
As if to see what the word "king" might mean
In those old times. Behold! what need that rim
Of crown 'gainst this blue sky, to signal him
A monarch, of the monarchs that have been,
And, perhaps, are not? — Read his destinies
In the full brow o'er-arching kingly eyes,
In the strong hands, grasping both rein and sword,
In the close mouth, so sternly beautiful: —
Surely, a man who his own spirit can rule;
Lord of himself, therefore his brethren's lord.

## II.

"*O Richard, O mon roi.*" So minstrels sighed.
The many-centuried voice dies fast away
Amidst the turmoil of our modern day.
How know we but these green-wreathed legends hide
An ugly truth that never could abide
In this our living world's far purer air? —
Nevertheless, O statue, rest thou there,
Our Richard, of all chivalry the pride;
Or if not the true Richard, still a type
Of the old regal glory, fallen, o'er-ripe,
And giving place to better blossoming:
Stand — imaging the grand heroic days;
And let our little children come and gaze,
Whispering with innocent awe — "This *was* a King."

## GUNS OF PEACE.

Sunday Night, March 30th, 1856.

HOSTS of dead soldiers in the battle slain,
Ghosts of dead heroes dying nobler far,
In the long patience of inglorious war,
Of famine, cold, heat, pestilence, and pain, —
All ye whose loss makes our victorious gain —
This quiet night, as sounds the cannon's tongue,
Do ye look down the trembling stars among
Viewing our peace and war with like disdain ?
Or wiser grown since reaching those new spheres,
Smile ye on those poor bones ye sowed as seed
For this our harvest, nor regret the deed ? —
Yet lift one cry with us to Heavenly ears —
" Strike with Thy bolt the next red flag unfurled,
And make all wars to cease throughout the world."

## DAVID'S CHILD.

—"Is the child dead?"—And they said, "He is dead."

N face of a great sorrow like to death
How do we wrestle night and day with tears;
How do we fast and pray; how small appears
The outside world, while, hanging on some breath
Of fragile hope, the chamber where we lie
Includes all space.—But if sudden at last
The blow falls; or by incredulity
Fond led, we—never having one thought cast
Towards years where "the child" was not—see it die,
And with it all our future, all our past,—
We just look round us with a dull surprise:
For lesser pangs we had filled earth with cries
Of wild and angry grief that would be heard:—
But when the heart is broken—not a word.

## A WORD IN SEASON.

HIS is a day the Lord hath made." — Thus spake
The good religious heart, unstained, unworn,
Watching the golden glory of the morn. —
Since, on each happy day that came to break
Like sunlight o'er this silent life of mine,
Yea, on each beauteous morning I saw shine,
I have remembered these your words, rejoiced
And been glad in it. So, o'er many-voiced
Tumultuous harmonies of tropic seas,
Which chant an everlasting farewell grand
Between ourselves and you and the old land,
Receive this token: many words chance-sown
May oftentimes have taken root and grown,
To bear good fruit perennially, like these.

## THE PATH THROUGH THE SNOW.

ARE and sunshiny, bright and bleak,
Rounded cold as a dead maid's cheek,
Folded white as a sinner's shroud,
Or wandering angel's robes of cloud. —
Well I know, well I know
Over the fields the path through the snow.

Narrow and rough it lies between
Wastes where the wind sweeps, biting keen:
Every step of the slippery road
Marks where some weary foot has trod;
Who 'll go, who 'll go
After the rest on the path through the snow?

They who would tread it must walk alone,
Silent and steadfast — one by one:
Dearest to dearest can only say,
"My heart! I 'll follow thee all the way,
As we go, as we go,
Each after each on this path through the snow."

It may be under that western haze
Lurks the omen of brighter days;
That each sentinel tree is quivering
Deep at its core with the sap of spring,

And while we go, while we go,
Green grass-blades pierce thro' the glittering snow.

It may be the unknown path will tend
Never to any earthly end,
Die with the dying day obscure,
And never lead to a human door:
That none know who did go
Patiently once on this path through the snow.

No matter, no matter! the path shines plain;
These pure snow-crystals will deaden pain;
Above, like stars in the deep blue dark,
Eyes that love us look down and mark.
Let us go, let us go,
Whither heaven leads in the path thro' the snow.

## THE PATH THROUGH THE CORN.

WAVY and bright in the summer air,
Like a pleasant sea when the wind blows fair,
And its roughest breath has scarcely curled
The green highway to a distant world, —

Soft whispers passing from shore to shore,
As from hearts content, yet desiring more —
Who feels forlorn,
Wandering thus down the path through the corn?

A short space since, and the dead leaves lay
Mouldering under the hedgerow gray,
Nor hum of insect, nor voice of bird,
O'er the desolate field was ever heard;
Only at eve the pallid snow
Blushed rose-red in the red sun-glow;
Till, one blest morn,
Shot up into life the young green corn.

Small and feeble, slender and pale,
It bent its head to the winter gale,
Hearkened the wren's soft note of cheer,
Hardly believing spring was near:
Saw chestnuts bud out and campions blow,
And daisies mimic the vanished snow
Where it was born,
On either side of the path through the corn.

The corn, the corn, the beautiful corn,
Rising wonderful, morn by morn:
First, scarce as high as a fairy's wand,
Then, just in reach of a child's wee hand;

Then growing, growing, tall, brave, and strong:
With the voice of new harvests in its song;
While in fond scorn
The lark out-carols the whispering corn.

A strange, sweet path, formed day by day,
How, when, and wherefore, we cannot say,
No more than of our life-paths we know,
Whither they lead us, why we go;
Or whether our eyes shall ever see
The wheat in the ear or the fruit on the tree;
Yet, who 's forlorn? —
He who watered the furrows can ripen the corn.

## THE GOOD OF IT.

### A Cynic's Song.

OME men strut proudly, all purple and gold,
Hiding queer deeds 'neath a cloak of good fame;
I creep along, braving hunger and cold,
To keep my heart stainless as well as my name;
So, so, where is the good of it?

Some clothe bare Truth in fine garments of words,
Fetter her free limbs with cumbersome state:
With me, let me sit at the lordliest boards,
"I love" means *I love*, and "I hate" means *I hate*,
But, but, where is the good of it?

Some have rich dainties and costly attire,
Guests fluttering round them and duns at the door:
I crouch alone at my plain board and fire,
Enjoy what I pay for and scorn to have more.
Yet, yet, where is the good of it?

Some gather round them a phalanx of friends,
Scattering affection like coin in a crowd;
I keep my heart for the few that heaven sends,
Where they 'll find their names writ when I lie in my shroud.
Still, still, where is the good of it?

Some toy with love, lightly come, lightly go,
A blithe game at hearts, little worth, little cost: —
I staked my whole soul on one desperate throw,
A life 'gainst an hour's sport. We played; and I — lost.
Ha, ha, such was the good of it!

MORAL: ADDED ON HIS DEATH-BED.

TURN the Past's mirror backward. Its shadows removed,
The dim confused mass becomes softened, sublime:
I have worked — I have felt — I have lived — I have loved,
And each was a step towards the goal I now climb:
Thou, God, Thou sawest the good of it.

## MINE.

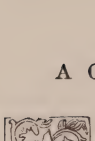
For a German Air.

HOW my heart is beating as her name
I keep repeating,
And I drink up joy like wine:
O how my heart is beating as her name
I keep repeating,
For the lovely girl is mine!
She 's rich, she 's fair, beyond compare,
Of noble mind, serene and kind —

And how my heart is beating as her name I keep
repeating,
For the lovely girl is mine!

O how my heart is beating as her name I keep
repeating,
In a music soft and fine;
O how my heart is beating as her name I keep
repeating,
For the girl I love is mine.
She owns no lands, has no white hands,
Her lot is poor, her life obscure; —
Yet how my heart is beating as her name I keep
repeating,
For the girl I love is mine!

## A GHOST AT THE DANCING.



WIND-SWEPT tulip-bed — a colored
cloud
Of butterflies careering in the air —
A many-figured arras stirred to life,
And merry unto midnight music dumb —
So the dance whirls. Do any think of thee,
Amiel, Amiel?

Friends greet each other — countless rills of talk
Meander round, scattering a spray of smiles.
Surely — the news was false. One minute more
And thou wilt stand here, tall and quiet-eyed,
Shakespearian beauty in thy pensive face,
Amiel, Amiel.

Many here knew and loved thee — I nor loved,
Scarce knew — yet in thy place a shadow glides,
And a face shapes itself from empty air,
Watching the dancers, grave and quiet-eyed —
Eyes that now see the angels evermore,
Amiel, Amiel.

On just such night as this, 'midst dance and song,
I bade thee carelessly a light good by —
"Good by" — saidst thou; "A happy journey home!"
Was the unseen death-angel at thy side,
Mocking those words — "*A happy journey home,*"
Amiel, Amiel?

Ay, we play fool's play still; thou hast gone home.
While these dance here, a mile hence o'er thy grave
Drifts the deep New Year snow. The wondrous gate
We spoke of, thou hast entered; I without

Grope ignorant still — thou dost its secrets know,
Amiel, Amiel.

What if, thus sitting where we sat last year,
Thou camest, took'st up our broken thread of talk,
And told'st of that new Home, which far I view,
As children, wandering on through wintry fields,
Mark on the hill the father's window shine,
Amiel, Amiel?

No. We shall see thy pleasant face no more;
Thy words on earth are ended. Yet thou livest;
'T is we who die. — I too, one day shall come,
And, unseen, watch these shadows, quiet-eyed —
Then flit back to thy land, the living land,
Amiel, Amiel.

## MY CHRISTIAN NAME.

MY Christian name, my Christian name,
I never hear it now:
None have the right to utter it,
'T is lost, I scarce know how.
My worldly name the world speaks loud;
Thank God for well-earned fame!

But silence sits at my cold hearth, —
I have no household name.

My Christian name, my Christian name,
It has an uncouth sound ;
My mother chose it out of those
In Bible pages found :
Mother, whose accents made half sweet
What else I held in shame,
Dost thou remember up in heaven
My poor lost Christian name ?

Brothers and sisters, mockers oft
Of the quaint name I bore,
Would I could leap back years, to hear
Ye shout it out once more !
One speaks it still, in written lines,
The last fraternal claim :
But the wide seas between us drown
Its sound — my Christian name.

I had a long dream once. *Her* voice
Might breathe the homely word,
And make it music — as love makes
Any name, said or heard.
O, dumb, dumb lips ! — O, silent heart !
Though it is no one's blame :
Now while I live I 'll never hear
Her speak my Christian name.

God send her bliss, and send me rest!
If her white footsteps calm
Should track my bleeding feet, God make
To them each blood-drop balm!
Peace — peace. O mother, put thou forth
Thine elder, holier claim,
And the first word I hear in heaven
May be my Christian name.

## A DEAD BABY.

ITTLE soul, for such brief space that entered
In this little body straight and chilly,
Little life that fluttered and departed,
Like a moth from an unopened lily,
Little being, without name or nation,
Where is now thy place among creation?

Little dark-lashed eyes, unclosèd never,
Little mouth, by earthly food ne'er tainted,
Little breast, that just once heaved, and settled
In eternal slumber, white and sainted, —
Child, shall I in future children's faces
See some pretty look that thine retraces?

Is this thrill that strikes across my heart-strings
  And in dew beneath my eyelid gathers,
Token of the bliss thou mightst have brought me,
  Dawning of the love they call a father's ?
Do I hear through this still room a sighing
Like thy spirit to me its author crying ?

Whence didst come and whither take thy journey,
  Little soul, of me and mine created ?
Must thou lose us, and we thee, forever,
  O strange life, by minutes only dated ?
Or new flesh assuming, just to prove us,
In some other babe return and love us ?

Idle questions all : yet our beginning
  Like our ending, rests with the Life-sender,
With whom naught is lost, and naught spent
      vainly :
  Unto Him this little one I render.
Hide the face — the tiny coffin cover :
So, our first dream, our first hope — is over.

## FOR MUSIC.

ALONG the shore, along the shore
I see the wavelets meeting:
But thee I see — ah, never more,
For all my wild heart's beating.
The little wavelets come and go,
The tide of life ebbs to and fro,
Advancing and retreating:
But from the shore, the steadfast shore,
The sea is parted never:
And mine I hold thee evermore,
Forever and forever.

Along the shore, along the shore,
I hear the waves resounding,
But thou wilt cross them nevermore
For all my wild heart's bounding:
The moon comes out above the tide
And quiets all the billows wide
Her pathway bright surrounding:
Thus on the shore, the dreary shore,
I walk with weak endeavor;
I have thy love's light evermore,
Forever and forever.

## THE CANARY IN HIS CAGE.

ING away, ay, sing away,
Merry little bird,
Always gayest of the gay,
Though a woodland roundelay
You ne'er sung nor heard;
Though your life from youth to age
Passes in a narrow cage.

Near the window wild birds fly,
Trees are waving round:
Fair things everywhere you spy
Through the glass pane's mystery,
Your small life's small bound:
Nothing hinders your desire
But a little gilded wire.

Like a human soul you seem
Shut in golden bars:
Placed amidst earth's sunshine-stream,
Singing to the morning beam,
Dreaming 'neath the stars;
Seeing all life's pleasures clear,—
But they never can come near.

Never! Sing, bird-poet mine,
As most poets do; —
Guessing by an instinct fine
At some happiness divine
Which they never knew.
Lonely in a prison bright
Hymning for the world's delight.

Yet, my birdie, you 're content
In your tiny cage:
Not a carol thence is sent
But for happiness is meant —
Wisdom pure as sage:
Teaching, the true poet's part
Is to sing with merry heart.

So, lie down thou peevish pen,
Eyes, shake off all tears;
And my wee bird, sing again:
I 'll translate your song to men
In these future years.
"Howsoe'er thy lot 's assigned,
Bear it with a cheerful mind."

## CONSTANCY IN INCONSTANCY.

### AN OLD MAN'S CONFESSION.

SHE has a large still heart — this lady of
mine,
(Not mine, i' faith! nor would I that
she were:)
She walks this world of ours like Grecian nymph,
Pure with a marble pureness, moving on
Among the herd of men, environed round
With native airs of deep Olympian calm.
I have a great love for that lady of mine:
I like to watch her motions, trick of face,
And turn of thought, when speaking high and wise
The tongue of gods, not men. Ay, every day,
And twenty times a day, I start to catch
Some look or gesture of familiar mould,
And then my panting soul leans forth to her
Like some sick traveller who astonied sees
Gliding across the distant twilight fields —
His lovely, lost, beloved memory-fields —
The shadowy people of an earlier world.
I have a friend, how dearly liked, heart-warm,
Did I confess, sure she and all would smile:
I watch her as she steals in some dull room

That brightens at her entrance — slow lets fall
A word or two of wise simplicity,
Then goes, and at her going all seems dark.
Little she knows this: little thinks each brow
Lightens, each heart grows purer with her eyes,
Good, honest eyes — clear, upward, righteous eyes,
That look as if they saw the dim unseen,
And learnt from thence their deep compassionate
calm.
Why do I precious hold this friend of mine?
Why in our talks, our quiet fireside talks,
When we, two earnest travellers through the dark,
Grasp at the guiding threads that homeward lead,
Seems it another soul than hers looks out
From these her eyes? — until I ofttimes start
And quiver, as when some soft ignorant hand
Touches the barb hid in a long-healed wound.
Yet still no blame, but thanks to thee, dear friend,
Ay, even when we wander back at eve,
Thy careless arm loose linked within my own —
The same height as I gaze down — nay, the hair
Her very color — fluttering 'neath the stars —
The same large stars which lit that earlier world.
I have another love — whose dewy looks
Are fresh with life's young dawn. I prophesy
The streak of light now trembling on the hills
Will broaden out into a glorious day.
Thou sweet one, meek as good, and good as fair,

Wise as a woman, harmless as a child,
I love thee well! And yet not thee, not thee,
God knows — *they* know who sit among the stars.
As one whose sun was darkened before noon,
Creeps patiently along the twilight lands,
Sees glow-worms, meteors, or tapers kind
Of an hour's burning, stops awhile to mark,
Thanks heaven for them, but never calls them day —
So love I these, and more. Yet thou, my sun,
Who rose, leaped to thy zenith, sat there throned,
And made the whole earth day — look, if thou canst,
Out of thy veilèd glory, and behold
How all these lesser lights but come and go,
Mere reflexes of thee. Be it so! I keep
My face unto the eastward, where thou stand'st —
I *know* thou stand'st — behind the purpling hills,
And I shall wake and find morn in the world.

## BURIED TO-DAY.

February 23, 1858.

URIED to-day.
When the soft green buds are bursting out,
And up on the south wind comes a shout
Of village boys and girls at play
In the mild spring evening gray.

Taken away
Sturdy of heart and stout of limb,
From eyes that drew half their light from him,
And put low, low, underneath the clay,
In his spring — on this spring day.

Passes away
All the pride of boy-life begun,
All the hope of life yet to run;
Who dares to question when One saith "Nay."
Murmur not — only pray.

Enters to-day
Another body in churchyard sod,
Another soul on the life in God.
His Christ was buried — and lives alway:
Trust Him, and go your way.

## THE MILL.

For an Irish Tune.

INDING and grinding
Round goes the mill:
Winding and grinding
Should never stand still.
Ask not if neighbor
Grind great or small:
Spare not *your* labor,
Grind *your* wheat all.
Winding and grinding round goes the mill:
Winding and grinding should never stand still.

Winding and grinding
Work through the day,
Grief never minding —
Grind it away!
What though tears dropping
Rust as they fall?
Have no wheel stopping —
Work comforts all.
Winding and grinding round goes the mill:
Winding and grinding should never stand still.

## NORTH WIND.

OUD wind, strong wind, sweeping o'er the mountains,
Fresh wind, free wind, blowing from the sea,
Pour forth thy vials like streams from airy fountains,
Draughts of life to me.

Clear wind, cold wind, like a Northern giant,
Stars brightly threading thy cloud-driven hair,
Thrilling the blank night with thy voice defiant,
Lo! I meet thee there.

Wild wind, bold wind, like a strong-armed angel,
Clasp me and kiss me with thy kisses divine;
Breathe in this dulled ear thy secret sweet evangel —
Mine — and only mine.

Fierce wind, mad wind, howling o'er the nations,
Knew'st thou how leapeth my heart as thou goest by:
Ah, thou wouldst pause awhile in a sudden patience
Like a human sigh.

Sharp wind, keen wind, cutting as word-arrows,
  Empty thy quiverful! pass by! What is 't to thee,
That in some mortal eyes life's whole bright circle narrows,
  To one misery?

Loud wind, strong wind, stay thou in the mountains,
  Fresh wind, free wind, trouble not the sea.
Or lay thy deathly hand upon my heart's warm fountains,
  That I hear not thee.

## NOW AND AFTERWARDS.

"Two hands upon the breast and labor is past."
RUSSIAN PROVERB.

WO hands upon the breast,
  And labor 's done;
Two pale feet crossed in rest —
  The race is won;
Two eyes with coin-weights shut,
  And all tears cease;
Two lips where grief is mute,
  Anger at peace";—

So pray we oftentimes, mourning our lot
God in his kindness answereth not.

"Two hands to work addrest
  Aye for His praise;
Two feet that never rest
  Walking His ways;
Two eyes that look above
  Through all their tears;
Two lips still breathing love,
  Not wrath, nor fears";
So pray we afterwards, low on our knees;
Pardon those erring prayers! Father, hear these!

## A SKETCH.

"Emelie, that fayrer was to seene
Than is the lilye on hys stalke grene.....
Uprose the sun and uprose Emelie."

OST thou thus love me, O thou beautiful?
So beautiful, that by thy side I seem
Like a great dusky cloud beside a star:
Yet thou creep'st o'er its edges, and it rests
On its lone path, the slow deep-hearted cloud —

Then opes a rift and lets thee enter in;
And with thy beauty shining on its breast,
Feels no more its own blackness — *thou* art fair.

Dost thou thus love me, O thou all beloved,
In whose large store the very meanest coin
Would out-buy my whole wealth? Yet here thou comest
Like a kind heiress from her purple and down
Uprising, who for pity cannot sleep,
But goes forth to the stranger at her gate —
The beggared stranger at her beauteous gate —
And clothes and feeds; scarce blest till she has blest.

Dost thou thus love me, O thou pure of heart,
Whose very looks are prayers? What couldst thou see
In this forsaken pool by the yew-wood's side,
To sit down at its bank, and dip thy hand,
Saying, "It is so clear!" — And lo, erelong
Its blackness caught the shimmer of thy wings,
Its slimes slid downward from thy stainless palm,
Its depths grew still that there thy form might rise.

O beautiful! O well-beloved! O rich
In all that makes my need! I lay me down
I' the shadow of thy love, and feel no pain.

The cloud floats on, thee glittering on its breast,
The beggar wears thy purple as his own:
The noisome waves, made calm, creep to thy feet
Rejoicing that they yet can image thee,
And beyond thee, God's heaven, thick-sown with
stars.

## THE UNKNOWN COUNTRY.

To a German Air.

HERE is the unknown country?"
I whispered sad and slow, —
"The strange and awful country
To which I soon must go, must go,
To which I soon must go?"

Out of the unknown country
A voice sang soft and low: —
"O pleasant is that country
And sweet it is to go, to go,
And sweet it is to go.

"Along the shining country
The peaceful rivers flow:

And in that wondrous country
The tree of life does grow, does grow,
The tree of life does grow."

Ah, then into that country
Of which I nothing know,
The everlasting country,
With willing heart I go, I go,
With willing heart I go.

## A CHILD'S SMILE.

"For I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

CHILD'S smile — nothing more;
Quiet, and soft, and grave, and seldom seen;
Like summer lightning o'er,
Leaving the little face again serene.

I think, boy well-beloved,
Thine angel, who did grieve to see how far
Thy childhood is removed
From sports that dear to other children are,

On this pale cheek has thrown
The brightness of his countenance, and made
A beauty like his own —
That, while we see it, we are half afraid,

And marvel, will it stay?
Or, long ere manhood, will that angel fair,
Departing some sad day,
Steal the child-smile and leave the shadow care?

Nay, fear not. As is given
Unto this child the father watching o'er,
His angel up in heaven
Beholds Our Father's face for evermore.

And he will help him bear
His burthen, as his father helps him now;
So may he come to wear
That happy child-smile on an old man's brow.

## VIOLETS.

SENT IN A LITTLE BOX.

ET them lie, yes, let them lie,
They 'll be dead to-morrow:
Lift the lid up quietly
As you 'd lift the mystery
Of a shrouded sorrow.

Let them lie, the fragrant things,
Their sweet souls thus giving:
Let no breezes' ambient wings,
And no useless water-springs
Lure them into living.

They have lived — they live no more:
Nothing can requite them
For the gentle life they bore
And up-yielded in full store
While it did delight them.

Yet, poor flowers, not sad to die
In the hand that slew ye,
Did ye leave the open sky,
And the winds that wandered by,
And the bees that knew ye.

Giving up a small earth place,
And a day of blooming,
Here to lie in narrow space,
Smiling in this sickly face,
This dull air perfuming?

O my pretty violets dead,
Coffined from all gazes,
We will also smiling shed
Out of our flowers witherèd,
Perfume of sweet praises.

And as ye, for this poor sake,
Love with life are buying,
So, I doubt not, ONE will make
All our gathered flowers to take
Richer scent through dying.

## EDENLAND.

For Music.

OU remember where in starlight
We two wandered hand in hand,
While the night-flowers poured their perfume,
And night-airs the still earth fanned? —
There I, walking yester even,
Felt like a ghost in Edenland.

I remember all you told me,
Looking up as we did stand,
While my heart poured out its perfume,
Like the night-flowers in your hand;
And the path where we two wandered
Seemed not like earth but Edenland.

Now the stars shine paler, colder
Night-flowers die without your hand;
Yet my spirit walks beside you
Everywhere, unsought, unbanned.
And I wait till we shall wander
Under the stars of Edenland.

## THE HOUSE OF CLAY.

THERE was a house, a house of clay,
Wherein the inmate sat all day,
Merry and poor;
For Hope sat with her, heart to heart,
Fond and kind, fond and kind,
Vowing he never would depart, —
Till all at once he changed his mind:
"Sweetheart, good by!" He slipped away
And shut the door.

But Love came past, and, looking in,
With smile that pierced like sunbeam thin
Through wall, roof, floor,
Stood in the midst of that poor room,
Grand and fair, grand and fair,
Making a glory out of gloom: —
Till at the window mocked grim Care:
Love sighed; "All lose, and nothing win?" —
He shut the door.

Then o'er the close-barred house of clay
Kind clematis and woodbine gay
Crept more and more;
And bees hummed merrily outside,

Loud and strong, loud and strong,
The inner silentness to hide,
The patient silence all day long;
Till evening touched with finger gray
The bolted door.

Most like, the next step passing by
Will be the Angel's, whose calm eye
Marks rich, marks poor:
Who, fearing not, at any gate
Stands and calls, stands and calls;
At which the inmate opens straight, —
Whom, ere the crumbling clay-house falls,
He takes in kind arms silently,
And shuts the door.

## WINTER MOONLIGHT.

OUD-VOICED night, with the wild wind blowing
Many a tune;
Stormy night, with white rain-clouds going
Over the moon;
Mystic night, that each minute changes,
Now as blue as the mountain-ranges

Far, far away;
Now as black as a heart where strange is
Joy, night or day.

Wondrous moonlight, unlike all moonlights
Since I was born;
That on a hundred, bright as noonlights,
Looks in slow scorn, —
Moonlights where the old vine-leaves quiver,
Moonlights shining on vale and river,
Where old paths lie;
Moonlights — Night, blot their like forever
Out of the sky!

Hail, new moonlight, fierce, wild, and stormy,
Wintry and bold!
Hail, sharp wind, that can strengthen, warm me,
If ne'er so cold!
Not chance-driven this deluge rages,
One doth pour out and One assuages;
Under His hand
Drifting, Noah-like, into the ages
shall touch land.

## THE PLANTING.

"I said to my little son, who was watching tearfully a tree he had planted, — 'Let it alone: it will grow while you are sleeping.'"

PLANT it safe and sure, my child,
Then cease watching and cease weeping;
You have done your utmost part:
Leave it with a quiet heart:
It will grow while you are sleeping.

"But, O father," says the child,
With a troubled face up-creeping,
"How can I but think and grieve
When the fierce wind comes at eve
Tearing it — and I lie sleeping!

"I have loved my young tree so!
In each bud seen leaf and floweret,
Watered it each day with prayers,
Guarded it with many cares,
Lest some canker should devour it.

O good father," sobs the child,
"If I come in summer's shining

And my pretty tree be dead,
How the sun will scorch my head,
How I shall sit lorn, repining!

"Rather let me, evermore,
An incessant watch thus keeping,
Bear the cold, the storm, the frost,
That my treasure be not lost —
Ay, bear aught — but idle sleeping."

Sternly said the father then,
"Who art thou, child, vainly grieving?
Canst *thou* send the balmy dews,
Or the rich sap interfuse
Through the dead trunk, inly living?

"Canst thou bid the heavens restrain
Natural tempests for thy praying?
Canst thou bend one tender shoot,
Urge the growth of one frail root,
Keep one leaflet from decaying?

"If it live to bloom all fair,
Will it praise *thee* for its blossom?
If it die, will any plaints
Reach thee, as with kings and saints
Drops it to the cold earth's bosom?

"Plant it — all thou canst! — with prayers:
It is safe 'neath His sky's folding
Who the whole earth compasses,
Whether we watch more or less,
His wide eye all things beholding.

"Should He need a goodly tree
For the shelter of the nations,
He will make it grow: if not,
Never yet His love forgot
Human love, and faith, and patience.

"Leave thy treasure in His hand —
Cease all watching and all weeping:
Years hence, men its shade may crave,
And its mighty branches wave
Beautiful above thy sleeping."

If his hope, tear-sown, that child
Garnered after joyful reaping,
Know I not: yet unawares
Gleams this truth through many cares,
"*It will grow while thou art sleeping.*"

## SITTING ON THE SHORE.

THE tide has ebbed away:
No more wild dashings 'gainst the adamant rocks,
Nor swayings amidst sea-weed false that mocks
The hues of gardens gay:
No laugh of little wavelets at their play:
No lucid pools reflecting heaven's clear brow —
Both storm and calm alike are ended now.

The rocks sit gray and lone:
The shifting sand is spread so smooth and dry,
That not a tide might ever have swept by
Stirring it with rude moan:
Only some weedy fragments idly thrown
To rot beneath the sky, tell what has been:
But Desolation's self has grown serene.

Afar the mountains rise,
And the broad estuary widens out,
All sunshine; wheeling round and round about
Seaward, a white bird flies.
A bird? Nay, seems it rather in these eyes
A spirit, o'er Eternity's dim sea
Calling — "Come thou where all we glad souls be.

O life, O silent shore,
Where we sit patient; O great sea beyond
To which we turn with solemn hope and fond,
But sorrowful no more:
A little while, and then we too shall soar
Like white-winged sea-birds into the Infinite Deep:
Till then, Thou, Father — wilt our spirits keep.

## EUDOXIA.

### FIRST PICTURE.

SWEETEST my sister, my sister that sits in the sun,
Her lap full of jewels, and roses in showers on her hair;
Soft smiling and counting her riches up slow, one by one,
Cool-browed, shaking dew from her garlands — those garlands so fair,
Many gasp, climb, snatch, struggle, and die for — *her* every-day wear!
O beauteous my sister, turn downwards those mild eyes of thine,
Lest they stab with their smiling, and blister or scorch where they shine.

Young sister who never yet sat for an hour in the cold,
Whose cheek scarcely feels half the roses that throng to caress,
Whose light hands hold loosely these jewels and silver and gold,
Remember thou those in the world who forever on press
In perils and watchings, and hunger and nakedness,
While thou sit'st content in the sunlight that round thee doth shine.
Take heed! these have long borne their burthen — now lift thou up thine.

Be meek — as befits one whose cup to the brim is love-crowned,
While others in dry dust drop empty — What, what canst thou know
Of the wild human tide that goes sweeping eternally round
The isle where thou sit'st pure and calm as a statue of snow,
Around which good thoughts like kind angels continually go?
Be pitiful. *Whose* eyes once turned from the angels to shine
Upon publicans, sinners? O sister, 't will not pollute thine.

*Who*, even-eyed, looks on His children, the black and the fair,
The loved and the unloved, the tempted, untempted — marks all,
And metes — not as man metes? If thou with weak tender hand dare
To take up His balances — say where His justice should fall,
Far better be Magdalen dead at the gate of thy hall —
Dead, sinning, and loving, and contrite, and pardoned, to shine
Midst the saints high in heaven, than thou, angel sister of mine!

## EUDOXIA.

### SECOND PICTURE.

DEAREST my sister, my sister who sits by the hearth,
With lids softly drooping, or lifted up saintly and calm,
With household hands folded, or opened for help and for balm,

And lips, ripe and dewy, or ready for innocent
mirth, —
Thy life rises upwards to heaven every day like a
psalm
Which the singer sings sleeping, and waked, would
half wondering say —
"I sang not. Nay, how could I sing thus? — I
only do pray."

O gentlest my sister, who walks in at every dark
door
Whether bolted or open, unheedful of welcome or
frown;
But entering silent as sunlight, and there sitting
down,
Illumines the damp walls and shines pleasant
shapes on the floor,
And unlocks dim chambers where low lies sad
Hope, without crown,
Uplifts her from sackcloth and ashes and black
mourning weeds,
Re-crowns and re-clothes her. — Then, on to the
next door that needs.

O blessed my sister, whose spirit so wholly dost
live
In loving, that even the word "loved," with its
rapturous sound,

Rings faintly, like earth-tunes when angels are hymning around:
Whose eyes say: "Less happy methinks to receive than to give." —
So whatsoever we give, may One give to thee without bound,
All best gifts — all dearest gifts — whether His right hand do close
Or open — He holds it forever above thee; — He knows!

## EUDOXIA.

### THIRD PICTURE.

SILENT my sister, who stands by my side at the shore,
Back gazing with me on those waves which we mortals call years,
That rose, grew, and threatened, and climaxed, and broke, and were o'er,
While we still sit watching and watching, our cheeks free from tears —
O sister, with looks so familiar, yet strange, flitting by,
Say, say, hast thou been to those dead years as faithful as I?

Have they cast at thy feet also, jewels and whitening bones,
Gold, silver, and wreck-wood, dank sea-weed and treasures of cost?
Hast thou buried thy dead, sought thy jewels 'midst shingle and stones,
And learnt how the lost is the found, and the found is the lost?
Or stood with clear eyes upturned placid 'twixt sorrow and mirth,
As asking deep questions that cannot be answered on earth? —

I know not. Who knoweth? Our own souls we scarcely do know,
And none knows his brother's. Who judges, contemns, or bewails,
Or mocketh, or praiseth? In this world's strange vanishing show,
The one truth is *loving*. O sister, the dark cloud that veils
All life, lets this rift through to glorify future and past.
"Love ever — love only — love faithfully — love to the last."

## BENEDETTA MINELLI.

### I.

#### THE NOVICE.

T is near morning. Ere the next night fall
I shall be made the bride of heaven. Then home
To my still marriage chamber I shall come,
And spouseless, childless, watch the slow years crawl.

These lips will never meet a softer touch
Than the stone crucifix I kiss; no child
Will clasp this neck. Ah, virgin-mother mild,
Thy painted bliss will mock me overmuch.

This is the last time I shall twist the hair
My mother's hand wreathed, till in dust she lay:
The name, her name, given on my baptism-day,
This is the last time I shall ever bear.

O weary world, O heavy life, farewell!
Like a tired child that creeps into the dark

To sob itself asleep, where none will mark, —
So creep I to my silent convent cell.

Friends, lovers whom I loved not, kindly hearts
Who grieve that I should enter this still door,
Grieve not. Closing behind me evermore,
Me from all anguish, as all joy, it parts.

Love, whom alone I loved; who stand'st far off,
Lifting compassionate eyes that could not save,
Remember, this my spirit's quiet grave
Hides me from worldly pity, worldly scoff.

'T was less thy hand than Heaven's which came between,
And dashed my cup down. See, I shed no tears:
And if I think at all of vanished years,
'T is but to bless thee, dear, for what has been.

My soul continually does cry to thee;
In the night-watches ghost-like stealing out
From its flesh tomb, and hovering thee about;
So live that I in heaven thy face may see!

Live, noble heart, of whom this heart of mine
Was half unworthy. Build up actions great,
That I down looking from the crystal gate
Smile o'er our dead hopes urned in such a shrine.

Live, keeping aye thy spirit undefiled,
That, when we stand before our Master's feet,
I with an angel's love may crown complete
The woman's faith, the worship of the child.

Dawn, solemn bridal morn; ope, bridal door;
I enter. My vowed soul may Heaven now take;
My heart its virgin spousal for thy sake;
O love, keeps sacred thus forevermore.

## II.

### THE SISTER OF MERCY.

IS it then so? — Good friends, who sit and sigh
While I lie smiling, are my life's sands run?
Will my next matins, hymned beyond the sun,
Mingle with those of saints and martyrs high?

Shall I with these my gray hairs turned to gold,
My aged limbs new clad in garments white,
Stand all transfigured in the angels' sight,
Singing triumphantly that moan of old, —

*Thy will be done?* It was done. O my God,
Thou know'st, when over grief's tempestuous sea
My broken-wingèd soul fled home to Thee,
I writhed, but never murmured at Thy rod.

It fell upon me, stern at first, then soft
As parent's kisses, till the wound was healed;
And I went forth a laborer in Thy field:—
They best can bind who have been bruisèd oft.

And Thou wert pitiful. I came heart-sore,
And drank Thy cup because earth's cups ran dry:
Thou slew'st me not for that impiety,
But madest the draught so sweet, I thirst no more.

I came for silence, heavy rest, or death:
Thou gavest instead life, peace, and holy toil:
My sighing lips from sorrow didst assoil,
And fill with righteous thankfulness each breath.

Therefore I praise Thee that Thou shuttest Thine ears
Unto my misery: didst Thy will, not mine:
That to this length of days Thy hand divine,
My feet from falling kept, mine eyes from tears.

Sisters, draw near. Hear my last words serene:
When I was young I walked in mine own ways,

Worshipped — not God: sought not alone His praise;
So he cut down my gourd while it was green.

And then He o'er me threw His holy shade,
That though no other mortal plants might grow,
Mocking the beauty that was long laid low,
I dwelt in peace, and His commands obeyed.

I thank Him for all joy and for all pain:
For healèd pangs, for years of calm content:
For blessedness of spending and being spent
In His high service where all loss is gain.

I bless Him for my life and for my death;
But most, that in my death my life is crowned,
Since I see there, with angels gathering round,
*My* angel. Ay, love, thou hast kept thy faith,

I mine. The golden portals will not close
Like those of earth, between us. Reach thy hand!
No *miserere*, sisters. Chant out grand
*Te Deum laudamus*. Now, — 't is all repose.

## A DREAM OF DEATH.

HERE shall we sail to-day?" — Thus said, methought,
A voice, that only could be heard in dreams:
And on we glided without mast or oar,
A wondrous boat upon a wondrous sea.

Sudden, the shore curved inward to a bay,
Broad, calm, with gorgeous sea-weeds waving slow
Beneath the water, like rich thoughts that stir
In the mysterious deep of poets' hearts.

So still, so fair, so rosy in the dawn
Lay that bright bay: yet something seemed to breathe,
Or in the air, or from the whispering waves,
Or from that voice, as near as one's own soul,

"*There was a wreck last night.*" A wreck? then where
The ship, the crew? — The all-entombing sea
On which is writ nor name nor chronicle
Laid itself o'er them with smooth crystal smile.

"*Yet was the wreck last night.*" And gazing down
Deep down below the surface, we were ware
Of ghastly faces with their open eyes
Uplooking to the dawn they could not see.

One moved with moving sea-weeds: one lay prone,
The tinted fishes gliding o'er his breast;
One, caught by floating hair, rocked quietly
Upon his reedy cradle, like a child.

"The wreck has been"—said the melodious voice;
"Yet all is peace. The dead, that, while we slept,
Struggled for life, now sleep and fear no storms:
O'er them let us not weep when heaven smiles."

So we sailed on above the diamond sands,
Bright sea-flowers, and white faces stony calm,
Till the waves bore us to the open main,
And the great sun arose upon the world.

## A DREAM OF RESURRECTION.

O heavenly beautiful it lay,
It was less like a human corse
Than that fair shape in which perforce
A lost hope clothes itself alway.

The dream showed very plain: the bed
Where that known unknown face reposed, —
A woman's face with eyelids closed,
A something precious that was dead;

A something, lost on this side life,
By which the mourner came and stood,
And laid down, ne'er to be indued,
All flaunting robes of earthly strife;

Shred off, like votive locks of hair,
Youth's ornaments of pride and strength,
And cast them in their golden length
The silence of that bier to share.

No tears fell, — but with gazings long
Lorn memory tried to print that face
On the heart's ever-vacant place,
With a sun-finger, sharp and strong. —

Then kisses, dropping without sound,
And solemn arms wound round the dead,
And lifting from the natural bed
Into the coffin's strange new bound.

Yet still no farewell, or belief
In death, no more than one believes
In some dread truth that sudden weaves
The whole world in a shroud of grief.

And still unanswered kisses; still
Warm clingings to the image cold
With an incredulous faith's close fold,
Creative in its fierce "*I will.*"

Hush, — hush! the marble eyelids move,
The kissed lips quiver into breath:
Avaunt, thou mockery of Death!
Avaunt! — we are conquerors, I and Love.

Corpse of dead Hope, awake, arise,
A living Hope that only slept
Until the tears thus overwept
Had washed the blindness from our eyes.

Come back into the upper day:
Pluck off these cerements. Patient shroud,
We 'll wrap thee as a garment proud
Round the fair shape we thought was clay.

Clasp, arms; cling, soul; eyes, drink anew
The beauty that returns with breath:
Faith, that out-loved this trance-like death,
May see this resurrection too.

## ON THE CLIFF-TOP.

ACE upward to the sky
Quiet I lie:
Quiet as if the finger of God's will
Had bade this human mechanism "be still!"
And sent the intangible essence, this strange *I*,
All wondering forth to His eternity.

Below, the sea's sound, faint
As dying saint
Telling of gone-by sorrows long at rest:
Above, the fearless sea-gull's shimmering breast
Painted a moment on the dark blue skies —
A hovering joy, that while I watch it flies.

Alike unheeded now
Old griefs, and thou
Quick-wingèd Joy, that like a bird at play
Pleasest thyself to visit me to-day:

On the cliff-top, earth dim and heaven clear,
My soul lies calmly, above hope — or fear.

But not — (do Thou forbid
Whose stainless lid
Wept tears at Lazarus' grave, and looking down
Afar off, upon Solyma's doomed town.)
Ah, not above *love* — human yet divine —
Which, Thee seen first, in Thee sees all of Thine!

Is 't sunset? The keen breeze
Blows from the seas:
And at my side a pleasant vision stands
With her brown eyes and kind extended hands.
Dear, we 'll go down together and full fain
From the cliff-top to the busy world again.

## AN EVENING GUEST.

IF, in the silence of this lonely eve,
With the street lamp pale flickering on the wall,
An angel were to whisper me, "Believe —
It shall be given thee. Call!" — whom should I call?

And then I were to see thee gliding in
  Clad in known garments, that with empty fold
Lie in my keeping, and my fingers, thin
  As thine were once, to feel in thy safe hold:

"I should fall weeping on thy neck and say,
  "I have so suffered since — since —" But my
    tears
Would stop, remembering how thou count'st thy
    day,
  A day that is with God a thousand years.

Then what are these sad days, months, years of
    mine,
  To thine eternity of full delight?
What my whole life, when myriad lives divine
  May wait, each leading to a higher height?

I lose myself — I faint. Beloved, best,
  Let me still dream, thy dear humanity
Sits with me here, my head upon thy breast,
  And then I will go back to heaven with thee.

## AFTER SUNSET.

EST — *rest* — four little letters, one short word,
Enfolding an infinitude of bliss —
Rest is upon the earth. The heavy clouds
Hang poised in silent ether, motionless,
Seeking nor sun nor breeze. No restless star
Thrills the sky's gray-robed breast with pulsing rays,
The night's heart has throbbed out.
No grass blade stirs,
No downy-winged moth comes flittering by
Caught by the light — Thank God, there is no light,
No open-eyed, loud-voiced, quick-motioned light,
Nothing but gloom and rest.
A row of trees
Along the hill horizon, westward, stands
All black and still, as if it were a rank
Of fallen angels, melancholy met
Before the amber gate of Paradise —
The bright shut gate, whose everlasting smile
Deadens despair to calm.
O, better far
Better than bliss is rest! If suddenly

Those burnished doors of molten gold, steel-barred,
Which the sun closed behind him as he went
Into his bridal chamber — were to burst
Asunder with a clang, and in a breath
God's mysteries were revealed — His kingdom
came —
The multitudes of heavenly messengers
Hastening throughout all space — the thunder quire
Of praise — the obedient lightnings' lambent gleam
Around the unseen Throne — should I not sink
Crushed by the weight of such beatitudes,
Crying, "Rest, only rest, thou merciful God!
Hide me within the hollow of Thy hand
In some dark corner of the universe,
Thy bright, full, busy universe, that blinds,
Deafens, and tortures — Give me only *rest!*"

O for a soul-sleep, long and deep and still!
To lie down quiet after the weary day,
Dropping all pleasant flowers from the numbed
hands,
Bidding good-night to all companions dear,
Drawing the curtains on this darkened world,
Closing the eyes, and with a patient sigh
Murmuring "Our Father" — fall on sleep, till
dawn!

## THE GARDEN-CHAIR.

### TWO PORTRAITS.

A PLEASANT picture, full of meanings deep,
Old age, calm sitting in the July sun,
On withered hands half-leaning — feeble hands,
That after their life-labors, light or hard,
Their girlish broideries, their marriage-ringed
Domestic duties, their sweet cradle cares,
Have dropped into the quiet-folded ease
Of fourscore years. How peacefully the eyes
Face us! Contented, unregretful eyes,
That carry in them the whole tale of life
With its one moral — "Thus all was — thus best."
Eyes now so near unto their closing mild
They seem to pierce direct through all that maze,
As eyes immortal do.

Here — Youth. She stands
Under the roses, with elastic foot
Poised to step forward; eager-eyed, yet grave
Beneath the mystery of the unknown To-come,
Though longing for its coming. Firm prepared

(So say the lifted head and close, sweet mouth)
For any future: though the dreamy hope
Throned on her girlish forehead, whispers fond,
"Surely they err who say that life is hard;
Surely it shall not be with me as these."

God knows: He only. And so best, dear child,
Thou woman-statured, sixteen-year-old child,
Meet bravely the impenetrable Dark
Under thy roses. Bud and blossom thou
Fearless as they — if thou art planted safe,
Whether for gathering or for withering, safe
In the King's garden.

## AN OLD IDEA.

TREAM of my life, dull, placid river, flow!
I have no fear of the ingulfing seas:
Neither I look before me nor behind,
But, lying mute with wave-dipped hand, float on.

It was not always so. My brethren, see
This scar-stained, trembling palm. It keeps the sign

Of youth's mad wrestling with the waves that drift
Immutably, eternally along.

I would have had them flow through fields and
flowers,
Giving and taking freshness, perfume, joy;
It winds through — here. Be silent, O my soul!
— The finger of God's wisdom drew its line.

So I lean back and look up to the stars,
And count the ripples circling to the shore,
And watch the solemn river rolling on
Until it widen to the open seas.

## PARABLES.

"Hold every mortal joy
With a loose hand."

WE clutch our joys as children do their
flowers;
We look at them, but scarce believe
them ours,
Till our hot palms have smirched their colors rare
And crushed their dewy beauty unaware.

But the wise Gardener, whose they were, comes by
At hours when we expect not, and with eye
Mournful yet sweet, compassionate though stern,
Takes them.
Then in a moment we discern
By loss, what was possession, and, half-wild
With misery, cry out like angry child:
"O cruel! thus to snatch my posy fine!"
He answers tenderly, "Not thine, but mine,"
And points to those stained fingers which do prove
Our fatal cherishing, our dangerous love;
At which we, chidden, a pale silence keep;
Yet evermore must weep, and weep, and weep.
So on through gloomy ways and thorny brakes,
Quiet and slow, our shrinking feet he takes
Led by the soilèd hand, which, laved in tears,
More and more clean beneath his sight appears.
At length the heavy eyes with patience shine —
"I am content. Thou took'st but what was thine."

And then he us his beauteous garden shows,
Where bountiful the Rose of Sharon grows:
Where in the breezes opening spice-buds swell,
And the pomegranates yield a pleasant smell:
While to and fro peace-sandalled angels move
In the pure air that they — not we — call Love:
An air so rare and fine, our grosser breath
Cannot inhale till purified by death.

And thus we, struck with longing joy, adore,
And, satisfied, wait mute without the door,
Until the gracious Gardener maketh sign,
"Enter in peace. All this is mine — and thine."

## LETTICE.

SAID to Lettice, our sister Lettice,
While drooped and glistened her eyelash brown,
"Your man 's a poor man, a cold and dour man,
There 's many a better about our town."
She smiled securely — "He loves me purely:
A true heart 's safe, both in smile or frown;
And nothing harms me while his love warms me,
Whether the world go up or down."

"He comes of strangers, and they are rangers,
And ill to trust, girl, when out of sight:
Fremd folk may blame ye, and e'en defame ye, —
A gown oft handled looks seldom white."
She raised serenely her eyelids queenly, —
"My innocence is my whitest gown;
No harsh tongue grieves me while he believes me,
Whether the world go up or down."

"Your man 's a frail man, was ne'er a hale man,
And sickness knocketh at every door,
And death comes making bold hearts cower, breaking —"
Our Lettice trembled; — but once, no more·
"If death should enter, smite to the centre
Our poor home palace, all crumbling down,
He cannot fright us, nor disunite us,
Life bears Love's cross, death brings Love's crown."

## A SPIRIT PRESENT.

F, coming from that unknown sphere
Where I believe thou art, —
The world unseen which girds our world
So close, yet so apart, —
Thy soul's soft call unto my soul
Electrical could reach,
And mortal and immortal blend
In one familiar speech, —

What wouldst thou say to me? wouldst ask
What, since did me befall?

Or close this chasm of cruel years
  Between us — knowing all?
Wouldst love me — thy pure eyes seeing that
  God only saw beside?
O, love me! 'T was so hard to live,
  So easy to have died.

If, while this dizzy whirl of life
  A moment pausing stayed,
I face to face with thee could stand,
  I would not be afraid:
Not though from heaven to heaven thy feet
  In glad ascent have trod,
While mine took through earth's miry ways
  Their solitary road.

We could not lose each other. World
  On world piled ever higher
Would part like banked clouds, lightning-cleft
  By our two souls' desire.
Life ne'er divided us; death tried,
  But could not; Love's voice fine
Called luring through the dark — then ceased,
  And I am wholly thine.

## A WINTER WALK.

WE never had believed, I wis,
At primrose time when west winds stole
Like thoughts of youth across the soul,
In such an altered time as this,

When if one little flower did peep
Up through the brown and sullen grass,
We should just look on it, and pass
As if we saw it in our sleep.

Feeling as sure as that this ray
Which cottage children call the sun,
Colors the pale clouds one by one, —
Our touch would make it drop to clay.

We never could have looked, in prime
Of April, or when July trees
Shook full-leaved in the evening bree
Upon the face of this pale time,

Still, soft, familiar; shining bleak
On naked branches, sodden ground,
Yet shining — as if one had found
A smile upon a dead friend's cheek,

Or old friend, lost for years, had strange
  In altered mien come sudden back,
  Confronting us with our great lack —
Till loss seemed far less sad than change.

Yet though, alas! Hope did not see
  This winter skeleton through full leaves,
  Out of all bareness Faith perceives
Possible life in field and tree.

In bough and trunk the sap will move,
  And the mould break o'er springing flowers;
  Nature revives with all her powers,
But only nature; — never love.

So, listlessly with linkèd hands
  Both Faith and Hope glide soft away;
  While in long shadows, cool and gray,
The sun sets o'er the barren lands.

## "WILL SAIL TO-MORROW."

HE good ship lies in the crowded dock,
Fair as a statue, firm as a rock:
Her tall masts piercing the still blue air,
Her funnel glittering white and bare,
Whence the long soft line of vapory smoke
Betwixt sky and sea like a vision broke,
Or slowly o'er the horizon curled
Like a lost hope fled to the other world:
She sails to-morrow, —
Sails to-morrow.

Out steps the captain, busy and grave,
With his sailor's footfall, quick and brave,
His hundred thoughts and his thousand cares,
And his steady eye that all things dares:
Though a little smile o'er the kind face dawns
On the loving brute that leaps and fawns,
And a little shadow comes and goes,
As if heart or fancy fled — where, who knows?
He sails to-morrow:
Sails to-morrow.

To-morrow the serried line of ships
Will quick close after her as she slips

Into the unknown deep once more:
To-morrow, to-morrow, some on shore
With straining eyes shall desperate yearn —
"This is not parting? return — return!"
Peace, wild-wrung hands! hush, sobbing breath!
Love keepeth its own through life and death;
Though she sails to-morrow —
Sails to-morrow.

Sail, stately ship; down Southampton water
Gliding fair as old Nereus' daughter:
Christian ship that for burthen bears
Christians, speeded by Christian prayers;
All kind angels follow her track!
Pitiful God, bring the good ship back!
All the souls in her forever keep
*Thine*, living or dying, awake or asleep:
Then sail to-morrow!
Ship, sail to-morrow!

## AT EVEN-TIDE.

C. N. — Died April, 1857.

HAT spirit is it that doth pervade
The silence of this empty room?
And as I lift my eyes, what shade
Glides off and vanishes in gloom?

I could believe this moment gone,
A known form filled that vacant chair,
That those kind eyes upon me shone
I never shall see anywhere!

The living are so far away:
But *thou* — thou seemest strangely near;
Knowest all my silent heart would say,
Its peace, its pain, its hope, its fear.

And from thy calm supernal height,
And wondrous wisdom newly won,
Smilest on all our poor delight,
And petty woe beneath the sun.

From all this coil thou hast slipped away,
As softly as a cloud departs
Along the hillside purple gray —
Into the heaven of patient hearts.

Nothing here suffered, nothing missed,
Will ever stir from its repose
The death-smile on her lips unkissed,
Who all things loves and all things knows.

And I, who, ignorant and weak,
Of love so helpless — quick to pain,
With restless longing ever seek
The unattainable in vain,

Find it strange comfort thus to sit
While the loud world unheeded rolls,
And clasp, ere yet the fancy flit,
A friend's hand from the land of souls.

## A DEAD SEA-GULL.

Near Liverpool

BLACK-LUSTRE eye, and idle wing,
And smirchèd breast that skims no more,
White as the foam itself, the wave —
Hast thou not even a grave
Upon the dreary shore,
Forlorn, forsaken thing?

Thou whom the deep seas could not drown,
Nor all the elements affright,
Flashing like thought across the main,
Mocking the hurricane,
Screaming with shrill delight
When the great ship went down.

Thee not thy beauty saved, nor mirth,
Nor daring, nor thy humble lot,
One among thousands — in quick haste
Fate clutched thee as she passed;
Dead — how, it matters not:
Corrupting, earth to earth.

And not a league from where it lies
Lie bodies once as free from stain,
And hearts as gay as this sea-bird's,
Whom all the preachers' words
Will ne'er make white again,
Or from the dead to rise.

Rot, pretty bird, in harmless clay: —
We sing too much poetic woes;
Let us be doing while we can:
Blessed the Christian man
Who on life's shore seeks those
Dying of soul decay.

## LOOKING EAST.

In January, 1858.

ITTLE white clouds, why are you flying
Over the sky so blue and cold?
Fair faint hopes, why are you lying
Over my heart like a white cloud's fold?

Slender green leaves, why are you peeping
Out of the ground where the snow yet lies?
Toying west wind, why are you creeping
Like a child's breath across my eyes?

Hope and terror by turns consuming,
Lover and friend put far from me, —
What should *I* do with the bright spring, coming
Like an angel over the sea?

Over the cruel sea that parted
Me from mine own, and rolls between; —
Out of the woful east, whence darted
Heaven's full quiver of vengeance keen.

Day teaches day, night whispers morning —
"Hundreds are weeping their dead, while thou

Weeping thy living — Rise, be adorning
Thy brows, unwidowed, with smiles." — But how?

O, had he married me! — unto anguish,
Hardship, sickness, peril, and pain;
That on my breast his head might languish
In lonely jungle or scorching plain;

O, had we stood on some rampart gory,
Till he — ere Horror behind us trod —
Kissed me, and killed me — so, with his glory
My soul went happy and pure to God!

Nay, nay, Heaven pardon me! me, sick-hearted,
Living this long, long life-in-death:
Many there are far wider parted
Who under one roof-tree breathe one breath.

But we that *loved* — whom one word half broken
Had drawn together close soul to soul
As lip to lip — and it was not spoken,
Nor may be while the world's ages roll.

I sit me down with my tears all frozen:
I drink my cup, be it gall or wine:
For I know, if he lives, I am his chosen —
I know, if he dies, that he is mine.

If love in its silence be greater, stronger
  Than million promises, sighs, or tears —
I will wait upon Him a little longer
  Who holdeth the balance of our years.

Little white clouds, like angels flying,
  Bring the spring with you across the sea —
Loving or losing, living or dying,
  Lord, remember, remember me!

## OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY.

A LITTLE bird flew my window by,
'Twixt the level street and the level sky,
The level rows of houses tall,
The long low sun on the level wall;
And all that the little bird did say
Was, "Over the hills and far away."

A little bird sang behind my chair,
From the level line of corn-fields fair,
The smooth green hedgerow's level bound
Not a furlong off — the horizon's bound,
And the level lawn where the sun all day
Burns: — "Over the hills and far away."

A little bird sings above my bed,
And I know if I could but lift my head
I would see the sun set, round and grand,
Upon level sea and level sand,
While beyond the misty distance gray
Is "Over the hills and far away."

I think that a little bird will sing
Over a grassy mound, next spring,
Where something that once was *me*, ye 'll leave
In the level sunshine, morn and eve:
But I shall be gone, past night, past day,
Over the hills and far away.

## TOO LATE.

"Douglas, Douglas, tendir and treu."

OULD ye come back to me, Douglas, Douglas,
In the old likeness that I knew,
I would be so faithful, so loving, Douglas, Douglas, Douglas, tender and true.

Never a scornful word should grieve ye,
I 'd smile on ye sweet as the angels do; —

Sweet as your smile on me shone ever,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true.

O to call back the days that are not!
My eyes were blinded, your words were few
Do you know the truth now up in heaven,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true?

I never was worthy of you, Douglas;
Not half worthy the like of you:
Now all men beside seem to me like shadows —
I love *you*, Douglas, tender and true.

Stretch out your hand to me, Douglas, Douglas,
Drop forgiveness from heaven like dew;
As I lay my heart on your dead heart, Douglas,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true.

## LOST IN THE MIST.

THE thin white snow-streaks pencilling
That mountain's shoulder gray,
While in the west the pale green sky
Smiled back the dawning day,
Till from the misty east the sun
Was of a sudden born

Like a new soul in Paradise —
How long it seems since morn!

One little hour, O round red sun,
And thou and I shall come
Unto the golden gate of rest,
The open door of home:
One little hour, O weary sun,
Delay the threatened eve
Till my tired feet that pleasant door
Enter and never leave.

Ye rooks that fly in slender file
Into the thick'ning gloom,
Ye 'll scarce have reached your grim gray tower
Ere I have reached my home;
Plover, that thrills the solitude
With such an eerie cry,
Seek you your nest ere night-fall comes,
As my heart's nest seek I.

O light, light heart and heavy feet,
Patience a little while!
Keep the warm love-light in these eyes,
And on these lips the smile:
Out-speed the mist, the gathering mist
That follows o'er the moor! —
The darker grows the world without
The brighter seems that door.

O door, so close yet so far off;
O mist that nears and nears!
What, shall I faint in sight of home?
Blinded — but not with tears —
'T is but the mist, the cruel mist,
Which chills this heart of mine:
These eyes, too weak to see that light —
It has not ceased to shine.

A little further, further yet:
The white mist crawls and crawls;
It hems me round, it shuts me in
Its great sepulchral walls:
No earth — no sky — no path — no light —
A silence like the tomb:
O me, it is too soon to die —
And I was going home!

A little further, further yet:
My limbs are young, — my heart —
O heart, it is not only life
That feels it hard to part:
Poor lips, slow freezing into calm,
Numbed hands that helpless fall,
And, a mile off, warm lips, fond hands,
Waiting to welcome all!

I see the pictures in the room,
The figures moving round,

The very flicker of the fire
Upon the patterned ground:
O that I were the shepherd-dog
That guards their happy door!
Or even the silly household cat
That basks upon the floor!

O that I sat one minute's space
Where I have sat so long!
O that I heard one little word
Sweeter than angel's song!
A pause — and then the table fills,
The harmless mirth brims o'er;
While I — O *can* it be God's will? —
I die, outside the door.

My body fails — my desperate soul
Struggles before it go:
The bleak air 's full of voices wild,
But not the voice I know;
Dim shapes come wandering through the dark:
With mocking, curious stares,
Faces long strange peer glimmering by —
But not one face of theirs.

Lost, lost, and such a little way
From that dear sheltering door!
Lost, lost, out of the loving arms
Left empty evermore!

His will be done. O, gate of heaven,
Fairer than earthly door,
Receive me! Everlasting arms,
Enfold me evermore!

And so, farewell * * * * *
What is this touch
Upon my closing eyes?
My name too, that I thought to hear
Next time in Paradise?
Warm arms — close lips — O, saved, saved, saved!
Across the deathly moor
Sought, found — and yonder through the night
Shineth the blessed door.

## SEMPER FIDELIS.

"Mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted."

THINK you, had we two lost fealty, something would not, as I sit
With this book upon my lap here, come and overshadow it?
Hide with spectral mists the pages, under each familiar leaf
Lurk, and clutch my hand that turns it with the icy clutch of grief?

Think you, were we twain divided, not by distance, time, or aught
That the world calls separation, but we smile at, better taught,
That I should not feel the dropping of each link you did untwine
Clear as if you sat before me with your true eyes fixed on mine?

That I should not, did you crumble as the other false friends do
To the dust of broken idols, know it without sight of you,
By some shadow darkening daylight in the fickle skies of spring,
By foul fears from household corners crawling over everything?

If that awful gulf were opening which makes two, however near,
Parted more than we were parted, dwelt we in each hemisphere, —
Could I sit here, smiling quiet on this book within my hand,
And while earth was cloven beneath me, feel no shock nor understand?

No, you cannot, could not alter. No, my faith
builds safe on yours,
Rock-like; though the winds and waves howl, its
foundation still endures:
By a man's will — "See, I hold thee: mine thou
art, and mine shalt be."
By a woman's patience — "Sooner doubt I my
own soul than thee."

So, Heaven mend us! we'll together once again
take counsel sweet;
Though this hand of mine drops empty, that blank
wall my blank eyes meet:
Life may flow on: men be faithless, — ay, forsooth,
and women too!
ONE is true; and as He liveth, I believe in truth
— and *you*.

## ONE SUMMER MORNING.

IT is but a little while ago:
The elm-leaves have scarcely begun to
drop away;
The sunbeams strike the elm-trunk just
where they struck that day —
Yet all seems to have happened long ago.

And the year rolleth round, slow, slow:
Autumn will fade to winter and winter melt in spring,
New life return again to every living thing.
Soon, this will have happened long ago.

The bonnie wee flowers will blow;
The trees will re-clothe themselves, the birds sing out amain, —
But never, never, never will the world look again
As it looked before this happened — long ago!

## MY LOVE ANNIE.

OFT of voice and light of hand
As the fairest in the land —
Who can rightly understand
My love Annie?

Simple in her thoughts and ways,
True in every word she says, —
Who shall even dare to praise
My love Annie?

Midst a naughty world and rude
Never in ungentle mood;
Never tired of being good —
My love Annie.

Hundreds of the wise and great
Might o'erlook her meek estate;
But on her good angels wait,
My love Annie.

Many or few the loves that may
Shine upon her silent way, —
God will love her night and day,
My love Annie.

## SUMMER GONE.

MALL wren, mute pecking at the last red plum
Or twittering idly at the yellowing boughs
Fruit-emptied, over thy forsaken house,—
Birdie, that seems to come
Telling, we too have spent our little store,
Our summer 's o'er:

Poor robin, driven in by rain-storms wild
To lie submissive under household hands
With beating heart that no love understands,
And scarèd eye, like a child
Who only knows that he is all alone
And summer 's gone;

Pale leaves, sent flying wide, a frightened flock
On which the wolfish wind bursts out, and tears
Those tender forms that lived in summer airs
Till, taken at this shock,
They, like weak hearts when sudden grief sweeps by,
Whirl, drop, and die: —

All these things, earthy, of the earth — do tell
This earth's perpetual story; we belong
Unto another country, and our song
Shall be no mortal knell;
Though all the year's tale, as *our* years run fast,
Mourns, "summer 's past."

O love immortal, O perpetual youth,
Whether in budding nooks it sits and sings
As hundred poets in a hundred springs,
Or, slaking passion's drouth,
In wine-press of affliction, ever goes
Heavenward, through woes:

O youth immortal — O undying love!
With these by winter fireside we 'll sit down
Wearing our snows of honor like a crown;
And sing as in a grove,
Where the full nests ring out with happy cheer,
"Summer is here."

Roll round, strange years; swift seasons, come and go;
Ye leave upon us but an outward sign;
Ye cannot touch the inward and divine,
While God alone does know;
There sealed till summers, winters, all shall cease
In His deep peace.

Therefore uprouse ye winds and howl your will;
Beat, beat, ye sobbing rains on pane and door;
Enter, slow-footed age, and thou, obscure,
Grand Angel — not of ill;
Healer of every wound, where'er thou come,
Glad, we 'll go home.

## THE VOICE CALLING.

N the hush of April weather,
With the bees in budding heather,
And the white clouds floating, floating,
and the sunshine falling broad:
While my children down the hill
Run and leap, and I sit still,—
Through the silence, through the silence art Thou
calling, O my God?

Through my husband's voice that prayeth,
Though he knows not what he sayeth,
Is it Thou who in Thy Holy Word hast solemn
words for me?
And when he clasps me fast,
And smiles fondly o'er the past,
And talks, hopeful, of the future — Lord, do I
hear only Thee?

Not in terror nor in thunder
Comes Thy voice, although it sunder
Flesh from spirit, soul from body, human bliss from
human pain:
All the work that was to do,
All the joys so sweet and new
Which Thou shewed'st me in a vision — Moses-
like — and hid'st again.

From this Pisgah, lying humbled,
The long desert where I stumbled,
And the fair plains I shall never reach, seem equal, clear and far:
On this mountain-top of ease
Thou wilt bury me in peace;
While my tribes march onward, onward, unto Canaan and war.

In my boy's loud laughter ringing,
In the sigh more soft than singing
Of my baby girl that nestles up unto this mortal breast,
After every voice most dear
Comes a whisper — "Rest not here."
And the rest Thou art preparing, is it best, Lord, is it best?

"Lord, a little, little longer!"
Sobs the earth-love, growing stronger:
*He* will miss me, and go mourning through his solitary days.
And heaven were scarcely heaven
If these lambs which Thou hast given
Were to slip out of our keeping and be lost in the world's ways.

Lord, it is not fear of dying
Nor an impious denying

Of Thy will, which forevermore on earth, in heaven, be done :
But the love that desperate clings
Unto these my precious things
In the beauty of the daylight, and the glory of the sun.

Ah, Thou still art calling, calling,
With a soft voice unappalling ;
And it vibrates in far circles through the everlasting years ;
When Thou knockest, even so !
I will arise and go. —
What, my little ones, more violets ? — Nay, be patient — mother hears.

## THE WREN'S NEST.

TOOK the wren's nest ; —
Heaven forgive me !
Its merry architects so small
Had scarcely finished their wee hall,
That, empty still, and neat and fair,
Hung idly in the summer air.
The mossy walls, the dainty door,
Where Love should enter and explore,

And Love sit carolling outside,
And Love within chirp multiplied; —
I took the wren's nest; —
Heaven forgive me!

How many hours of happy pains
Through early frosts and April rains,
How many songs at eve and morn
O'er springing grass and greening corn,
What labors hard through sun and shade
Before the pretty house was made!
One little minute, only one,
And she 'll fly back, and find it — gone!
I took the wren's nest:
Bird, forgive me!

Thou and thy mate, sans let, sans fear,
Ye have before you all the year,
And every wood holds nooks for you,
In which to sing and build and woo;
One piteous cry of birdish pain —
And ye 'll begin your life again,
And quite forget the lost, lost home
In many a busy home to come. —
But I? — Your wee house keep I must
Until it crumble into dust.
I took the wren's nest:
God forgive me!

## A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

TUNE — "God rest ye, merry gentlemen."

OD rest ye, merry gentlemen; let nothing you dismay,
For Jesus Christ, our Saviour, was born on Christmas-day.
The dawn rose red o'er Bethlehem, the stars shone through the gray,
When Jesus Christ, our Saviour, was born on Christmas-day.

God rest ye, little children; let nothing you affright,
For Jesus Christ, your Saviour, was born this happy night;
Along the hills of Galilee the white flocks sleeping lay,
When Christ, the Child of Nazareth, was born on Christmas-day.

God rest ye, all good Christians; upon this blessed morn
The Lord of all good Christians was of a woman born:

Now all your sorrows He doth heal, your sins He takes away;
For Jesus Christ, our Saviour, was born on Christmas-day.

## THE MOTHER'S VISITS.

From the French.

ONG years ago she visited my chamber,
Steps soft and slow, a taper in her hand;
Her fond kiss she laid upon my eyelids,
Fair as an angel from the unknown land:
Mother, mother, is it thou I see?
Mother, mother, watching over me.

And yesternight I saw her cross my chamber,
Soundless as light, a palm-branch in her hand;
Her mild eyes she bent upon my anguish,
Calm as an angel from the blessed land;
Mother, mother, is it thou I see?
Mother, mother, art thou come for me?

## A GERMAN STUDENT'S FUNERAL HYMN.

"Thou shalt call, and I will answer Thee: Thou wilt have a desire to the work of Thine hands."

ITH steady march across the daisy meadow,
And by the churchyard wall we go;
But leave behind, beneath the linden shadow,
One, who no more will rise and go:
Farewell, our brother, here sleeping in dust,
Till thou shalt wake again, wake with the just.

Along the street where neighbor nods to neighbor,
Along the busy street we throng,
Once more to laugh, to live and love and labor,—
But he will be remembered long:
Sleep well, our brother, though sleeping in dust:
Shalt thou not rise again — rise with the just?

Farewell, true heart and kindly hand, left lying
Where wave the linden branches calm;
'T is his to live, and ours to wait for dying,
We win, while he has won, the palm;
Farewell, our brother! But one day, we trust,
Call — he will answer Thee, God of the just.

## WESTWARD HO!

WE should not sit us down and sigh,
My girl, whose brow a fane appears,
Whose steadfast eyes look royally
Backwards and forwards o'er the years—

The long, long years of conquered time,
The possible years unwon, that slope
Before us in the pale sublime
Of lives that have more faith than hope.

We dare not sit us down and dream
Fond dreams, as idle children do:
My forehead owns too many a seam,
And tears have worn their channels through

Your poor thin cheeks, which now I take
'Twixt my two hands, caressing. Dear,
A little sunshine for my sake!
Although we 're far on in the year.

Though all our violets, sweet! are dead,
The primrose lost from fields we knew,
Who knows what harvests may be spread
For reapers brave like me and you?

Who knows what bright October suns
May light up distant valleys mild,
Where as our pathway downward runs
We see Joy meet us, like a child

Who, sudden, by the roadside stands,
To kiss the travellers' weary brows,
And lead them through the twilight lands
Safely unto their Father's house.

So, we 'll not dream, nor look back, dear!
But march right on, content and bold,
To where our life sets, heavenly clear,
Westward, behind the hills of gold.

# POEMS SINCE 1860.

## OUR FATHER'S BUSINESS:

### HOLMAN HUNT'S PICTURE OF "CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE."

CHRIST-CHILD, Everlasting, Holy One,
Sufferer of all the sorrow of this world,
Redeemer of the sin of all this world,
Who by Thy death brought'st life into this world, —
O Christ, hear us!

This, this is *Thou*. No idle painter's dream
Of aureoled, imaginary Christ,
Laden with attributes that make not God;
But Jesus, son of Mary; lowly, wise,
Obedient, subject unto parents, mild,
Meek — as the meek that shall inherit earth,
Pure — as the pure in heart that shall see God.

O infinitely human, yet divine!
Half clinging childlike to the mother found,

Yet half repelling — as the soft eyes say,
"How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not
That I must be about my Father's business?"
As in the Temple's splendors mystical,
Earth's wisdom hearkening to the all-wise One,
Earth's closest love clasping the all-loving One,
He sees far off the vision of the cross,
The Christ-like glory and the Christ-like doom.

Messiah! Elder Brother, Priest and King,
The Son of God, and yet the woman's seed;
Enterer within the veil; Victor of death,
And made to us first fruits of them that sleep;
Saviour and Intercessor, Judge and Lord, —
All that we know of Thee, or knowing not
Love only, waiting till the perfect time
When we shall know even as we are known —
O Thou Child Jesus, Thou dost seem to say
By the soft silence of these heavenly eyes
(That rose out of the depths of nothingness
Upon this limner's reverent soul and hand)
We too should be about our Father's business —
O Christ, hear us!

Have mercy on us, Jesus Christ, our Lord!
The cross Thou borest still is hard to bear;
And awful even to humblest follower
The little that Thou givest each to do

Of this Thy Father's business ; whether it be
Temptation by the devil of the flesh,
Or long-linked years of lingering toil obscure,
Uncomforted, save by the solemn rests
On mountain-tops of solitary prayer ;
Oft ending in the supreme sacrifice,
The putting off all garments of delight,
And taking sorrow's kingly crown of thorn,
In crucifixion of all self to Thee,
Who offeredst up Thyself for all the world.
O Christ, hear us !

Our Father's business : — unto us, as Thee,
The whole which this earth-life, this hand-breadth span
Out of our everlasting life that lies
Hidden with Thee in God, can ask or need.
Outweighing all that heap of petty woes —
To us a measure huge — which angels blow
Out of the balance of our total lot,
As zephyrs blow the winged dust away.

O Thou who wert the Child of Nazareth,
Make us see only this, and only Thee,
Who camest but to do thy Father's will,
And didst delight to do it. Take Thou then
Our bitterness of loss, — aspirings vain,
And anguishes of unfulfilled desire,

Our joys imperfect, our sublimed despairs,
Our hopes, our dreams, our wills, our loves, our all,
And cast them into the great crucible
In which the whole earth, slowly purified,
Runs molten, and shall run — the Will of God.
O Christ, hear us!

## AN AUTUMN PSALM FOR 1860.

"He that goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

NO shadow o'er the silver sea,
That as in slumber heaves,
No cloud on the September sky,
No blight on any leaves,
As the reaper comes rejoicing,
Bringing in his sheaves.

Long, long and late the spring delayed,
And summer, dank with rain,
Hung trembling o'er her sunless fruit,
And her unripened grain;
And, like a weary, hopeless life,
Sobbed herself out in pain.

So the year laid her child to sleep,
  Her beauty half expressed;
Then slowly, slowly cleared the skies,
  And smoothed the seas to rest,
And raised the fields of yellowing corn
  O'er Summer's buried breast;

Till Autumn counterfeited Spring
  With such a flush of flowers,
His fiery-tinctured garlands more
  Than mocked the April bowers,
And airs as sweet as airs of June
  Brought on the twilight hours.

O holy twilight, tender, calm!
  O star above the sea!
O golden harvest, gathered in
  With late solemnity,
And thankful joy for gifts nigh lost
  Which yet so plenteous be; —

Although the rain-cloud wraps the hill,
  And sudden swoop the leaves,
And the year nears his sacred end,
  No eye weeps — no heart grieves:
For the reaper came rejoicing,
  Bringing in his sheaves.

## IN THE JUNE TWILIGHT.

Suggested by Noel Paton's Picture of "The Silver Cord Loosed."

N the June twilight, in the soft gray twilight,
The yellow sun-glow trembling through the rainy eve,
As my love lay quiet, came the solemn fiat,
"All these things forever — *forever* — thou must leave."

My love she sank down quivering, like a pine in tempest shivering —
"I have had so little happiness as yet beneath the sun:
I have called the shadow sunshine, and the merest frosty moonshine
I have, weeping, blessed the Lord for, as if daylight had begun;

"Till He sent a sudden angel, with a glorious sweet evangel,
Who turned all my tears to pearl-gems, and crowned *me* — so little worth;

*Me!* — and through the rainy even changed my
poor earth into heaven,
Or, by wondrous revelation, brought the heav-
ens down to earth.

"O the strangeness of the feeling! — O the infi-
nite revealing —
To think how God must love me to have made
me so content!
Though I would have served Him humbly, and
patiently, and dumbly,
Without any angel standing in the pathway
that I went."

In the June twilight — in the lessening twilight —
My love cried from my bosom an exceeding bit-
ter cry:
"Lord, wait a little longer, until my soul is
stronger, —
O, wait till Thou hast taught me to be content
to die."

Then the tender face, all woman, took a glory
superhuman,
And she seemed to watch for something, or see
some I could not see:
From my arms she rose full statured, all transfig-
ured, queenly featured —
"As Thy will is done in heaven, so on earth
still let it be."

* * * * *

I go lonely, I go lonely, and I feel that earth is only
The vestibule of palaces whose courts we never win:
Yet I see my palace shining, where my love sits, amaranths twining,
And I know the gates stand open, and I shall enter in.

## A MAN'S WOOING.

OU said, last night, you did not think
In all the world of men
Was one true lover — true alike
In deed and word and pen; —

One knightly lover, constant as
The old knights, who sleep sound:
Some women, said you, there might be —
Not one man faithful found:

Not one man, resolute to win,
Or, winning, firm to hold
The woman, among women — sought
With steadfast love and bold.

Not one whose noble life and pure
Had power so to control
To tender humblest loyalty
Her free, but reverent soul,

That she beside him gladly moved
As sovereign and slave;
In faith unfettered, homage true,
Each claiming what each gave.

And then you dropped your eyelids white,
And stood in maiden bloom
Proud, calm: — unloving and unloved
Descending to the tomb.

I let you speak and ne'er replied;
I watched you for a space,
Until that passionate glow, like youth,
Had faded from your face.

No anger showed I — nor complaint:
My heart's beats shook no breath,
Although I knew that I had found
Her, who brings life or death;

The woman, true as life or death;
The love, strong as these twain,
Against which seas of mortal fate
Beat harmlessly in vain.

"Not one true man": I hear it still,
Your voice's clear cold sound,
Upholding all your constant swains
And good knights underground.

"Not one true lover": — Woman, turn;
I love you. Words are small;
'T is life speaks plain: In twenty years
Perhaps you may know all.

I seek you. You alone I seek:
All other women, fair,
Or wise, or good, may go their way,
Without my thought or care.

But you I follow day by day,
And night by night I keep
My heart's chaste mansion lighted, where
Your image lies asleep.

Asleep! If e'er to wake, He knows
Who Eve to Adam brought,
As you to me: the embodiment
Of boyhood's dear sweet thought,

And youth's fond dream, and manhood's hope,
That still half hopeless shone;
Till every rootless vain ideal
Commingled into one, —

*You;* who are so diverse from me,
And yet as much my own
As this my soul, which, formed apart,
Dwells in its bodily throne; —

Or rather, for *that* perishes,
As these our two lives are
So strangely, marvellously drawn
Together from afar;

Till week by week and month by month
We closer seem to grow,
As two hill streams, flushed with rich rain,
Each into the other flow.

I swear no oaths, I tell no lies,
Nor boast I never knew
A love-dream — we all dream in youth —
But waking, I found *you*,

The real woman, whose first touch
Aroused to highest life
My real manhood. Crown it then,
Good angel, friend, love, wife!

Imperfect as I am, and you,
Perchance, not all you seem,
We two together shall bind up
Our past's bright, broken dream.

We two together shall dare look
  Upon the years to come,
As travellers, met in far countrie,
  Together look towards home.

Come home! The old tales were not false,
  Yet the new faith is true;
Those saintly souls who made men knights
  Were women such as you.

For the great love that teaches love
  Deceived not, ne'er deceives:
And she who most believes in man
  Makes him what she believes.

Come! If you come not, I can wait;
  My faith, like life, is long;
My will — not little; my hope much:
  The patient are the strong.

Yet come, ah come! The years run fast,
  And hearths grow swiftly cold —
Hearts too: but while blood beats in mine
  It holds you and will hold.

And so before you it lies bare, —
  Take it or let it lie,
It is an honest heart; and yours
  To all eternity.

## THE CATHEDRAL TOMBS.

"Post tempestatem tranquillitas."
*Epitaph in Ely Cathedral.*

HEY lie, with upraised hands, and feet
Stretched like dead feet that walk no more,
And stony masks oft human sweet,
As if the olden look each wore,
Familiar curves of lip and eye,
Were wrought by some fond memory.

All waiting: the new-coffined dead,
The handful of mere dust that lies
Sarcophagused in stone and lead
Under the weight of centuries:
Knight, cardinal, bishop, abbess mild,
With last week's buried year-old child.

After the tempest cometh peace,
After long travail sweet repose;
These folded palms, these feet that cease
From any motion, are but shows
Of — what? *What* rest? *How* rest they? *Where?*
The generations naught declare.

Dark grave, unto whose brink we come,
  Drawn nearer by all nights and days;
Each after each, thy solemn gloom
  We pierce with momentary gaze,
Then go, unwilling or content,
The way that all our fathers went.

Is there no voice or guiding hand
  Arising from the awful void,
To say, "Fear not the silent land;
  Would He make aught to be destroyed?
Would He? or can He? What know we
Of Him who is Infinity?

Strong Love, which taught us human love,
  Helped us to follow through all spheres
Some soul that did sweet dead lips move,
  Lived in dear eyes in smiles and tears,
Love — once so near our flesh allied,
That "Jesus wept" when Lazarus died; —

Eagle-eyed Faith that can see God,
  In worlds without and heart within;
In sorrow by the smart o' the rod,
  In guilt by the anguish of the sin;
In everything pure, holy, fair,
God saying to man's soul, "I am there"; —

These only, twin-archangels, stand
  Above the abyss of common doom,
These only stretch the tender hand
  To us descending to the tomb,
Thus making it a bed of rest
With spices and with odors drest.

So, like one weary and worn, who sinks
  To sleep beneath long faithful eyes,
Who asks no word of love, but drinks
  The silence which is paradise —
We only cry — "Keep angelward,
And give us good rest, O good Lord!"

## WHEN GREEN LEAVES COME AGAIN.

SONG.

HEN green leaves come again, my love,
  When green leaves come again, —
Why put on such a cloudy face,
  When green leaves come again?

"Ah, this spring will be like the last,
  Of promise false and vain;

And summer die in winter's arms
  Ere green leaves come again.

"So slip the seasons — and our lives:
  'T is idle to complain:
But yet I sigh, I scarce know why,
  When green leaves come again."

Nay, lift up thankful eyes, my sweet!
  Count equal, loss and gain:
Because, as long as the world lasts,
  Green leaves *will* come again.

For, sure as earth lives under snows,
  And Love lives under pain,
'T is good to sing with everything,
  "When green leaves come again."

## THE FIRST WAITS.

### A MEDITATION FOR ALL.

O, Christmas is here again! —
While the house sleeps, quiet as death,
'Neath the midnight moon comes the Waits' shrill tune,
And we listen and hold our breath.

The Christmas that never was —
On this foggy November air,
With clear pale gleam, like the ghost of a dream,
It is painted everywhere.

The Christmas that might have been —
It is borne in the far-off sound,
Down the empty street, with the tread of feet
That lie silent underground.

The Christmas that yet may be —
Like the Bethlehem star, leads kind:
Yet our life slips past, hour by hour, fast, fast,
Few before — and many behind.

The Christmas we have and hold,
With a tremulous tender strain,

Half joy, half fears — Be the psalm of the years,
"Grief passes, blessings remain!"

The Christmas that sure will come,
Let us think of, at fireside fair; —
When church bells sound o'er one small green mound,
Which the neighbors pass to prayer.

The Christmas that God will give, —
Long after all these are o'er,
When is day nor night, for the LAMB is our Light,
And we live forevermore.

## DAY BY DAY.

VERY day has its dawn,
Its soft and silent eve,
Its noontide hours of bliss or bale, —
Why should we grieve?

Why do we heap huge mounds of years
Before us and behind,
And scorn the little days that pass
Like angels on the wind?

Each turning round a small sweet face
As beautiful as near;
Because it is so small a face
We will not see it clear:

We will not clasp it as it flies,
And kiss its lips and brow:
We will not bathe our wearied souls
In its delicious Now.

And so it turns from us, and goes
Away in sad disdain:
Though we would give our lives for it,
It never comes again.

Yet, every day has its dawn,
Its noontide and its eve:
Live while we live, giving God thanks —
He will not let us grieve.

## ONLY A WOMAN.

"She loves with love that cannot tire:
And if, ah, woe! she loves alone,
Through passionate duty love flames higher,
As grass grows taller round a stone."

COVENTRY PATMORE.

O, the truth 's out. I 'll grasp it like a snake, —
It will not slay me. My heart shall not break
Awhile, if only for the children's sake.

For his too, somewhat. Let him stand unblamed;
None say, he gave me less than honor claimed,
Except — one trifle scarcely worth being named —

The *heart*. That 's gone. The corrupt dead might be
As easily raised up, breathing — fair to see,
As he could bring his whole heart back to me.

I never sought him in coquettish sport,
Or courted him as silly maidens court,
And wonder when the longed-for prize falls short.

I only loved him — any woman would:
But shut my love up till he came and sued,
Then poured it o'er his dry life like a flood.

I was so happy I could make him blest!
So happy that I was his first and best,
As he mine — when he took me to his breast.

Ah me! if only then he had been true!
If for one little year, a month or two,
He had given me love for love, as was my due!

Or had he told me, ere the deed was done,
He only raised me to his heart's dear throne —
Poor substitute — because the queen was gone!

O, had he whispered, when his sweetest kiss
Was warm upon my mouth in fancied bliss,
He had kissed another woman even as this, —

It were less bitter! Sometimes I could weep
To be thus cheated, like a child asleep: —
Were not my anguish far too dry and deep.

So I built my house upon another's ground;
Mocked with a heart just caught at the rebound —
A cankered thing that looked so firm and sound.

And when that heart grew colder — colder still,
I, ignorant, tried all duties to fulfil,
Blaming my foolish pain, exacting will,

All — anything but him. It was to be:
The full draught others drink up carelessly
Was made this bitter Tantalus-cup for me.

I say again — he gives me all I claimed,
I and my children never shall be shamed:
He is a just man — he will live unblamed.

Only — O God, O God, to cry for bread,
And get a stone! Daily to lay my head
Upon a bosom where the old love 's dead!

Dead? — Fool! It never lived. It only stirred
Galvanic, like an hour-cold corpse. None heard:
So let me bury it without a word.

He 'll keep that other woman from my sight.
I know not if her face be foul or bright;
I only know that it was his delight —

As his was mine: I only know he stands
Pale, at the touch of their long-severed hands,
Then to a flickering smile his lips commands,

Lest I should grieve, or jealous anger show.
He need not. When the ship 's gone down, I trow,
We little reck whatever wind may blow.

And so my silent moan begins and ends.
No world's laugh or world's taunt, no pity of friends
Or sneer of foes with this my torment blends.

None knows — none heeds. I have a little pride;
Enough to stand up, wife-like, by his side,
With the same smile as when I was a bride.

And I shall take his children to my arms;
They will not miss these fading, worthless charms;
Their kiss — ah! unlike his — all pain disarms.

And haply, as the solemn years go by,
He will think sometimes with regretful sigh,
The other woman was less true than I.

## A "MERCENARY" MARRIAGE.

HE moves as light across the grass
As moves my shadow large and tall;
And like my shadow, close yet free,
The thought of her aye follows me,
My little maid of Moreton Hall.

No matter how or where we loved,
Or when we 'll wed, or what befall;
I only feel she 's mine at last,
I only know I 'll hold her fast,
Though to dust crumbles Moreton Hall.

Her pedigree — good sooth, 't is long!
Her grim sires stare from every wall;
And centuries of ancestral grace
Revive in her sweet girlish face,
As meek she glides through Moreton Hall.

Whilst I have — nothing; save, perhaps,
Some worthless heaps of idle gold,
And a true heart — the which her eye
Through glittering dross spied, womanly,
Therefore they say *her* heart was sold!

I laugh — she laughs — the hills and vales
  Laugh as we ride 'neath chestnuts tall,
Or start the deer that silent graze,
And look up, large-eyed, with soft gaze,
  At the fair maid of Moreton Hall; —

We let the neighbors talk their fill,
  For life is sweet, and love is strong,
And two, close knit in marriage ties,
The whole world's shams may well despise, —
  Its folly, madness, shame, and wrong.

We are not proud, with a fool's pride,
  Nor cowards — to be held in thrall
By pelf or lineage, rank or lands: —
One honest heart, two honest hands,
  Are worth far more than Moreton Hall.

Therefore, we laugh to scorn — we two —
  The bars that weaker souls appal:
I take her hand, and hold it fast —
Knowing she'll love me to the last —
  My dearest maid of Moreton Hall.

## OVER THE HILLSIDE.

FAREWELL. In dimmer distance
I watch your figures glide,
Across the sunny moorland,
The brown hillside;

Each momently up rising
Large, dark against the sky,
Then — in the vacant moorland,
Alone sit I.

Within the unknown country
Where your lost footsteps pass,
What beauty decks the heavens
And clothes the grass!

Over the mountain shoulder
What glories may unfold!
Though I see but the mountain
Bleak, bare and cold, —

And the white road, slow winding
To where, each after each,
You slipped away — ah, whither?
I cannot reach.

And if I call, what answers?
Only 'twixt earth and sky,
Like wail of parting spirit,
The curlew's cry.

* * * *

Yet, sunny is the moorland,
And soft the pleasant air,
And little flowers like blessings,
Grow everywhere.

While, over all, the mountain
Stands sombre, calm, and still,
Immutable and steadfast,
As the One Will.

Which, done on earth, in heaven
Eternally confessed
By men and saints and angels,
Be ever blest!

Under its infinite shadow
(Safer than light of ours!)
I 'll sit me down a little,
And gather flowers.

Then I will rise and follow
After the setting day,
Without one wish to linger, —
The appointed way.

## THE UNFINISHED BOOK.

TAKE it, reader, idly passing,
This, like other idle lines;
Take it, critic, great at classing
Subtle genius and its signs:
But, O reader, be thou dumb;
Critic, let no sharp wit come;
For the hand that wrote and blurred
Will not write another word;
And the soul you scorn or prize,
Now than angels is more wise.

Take it, heart of man or woman,
This unfinished broken strain,
Whether it be poor and common
Or the noblest work of brain;
Let that good heart only sit
Now in judgment over it
Tenderly, as we would read,—
Any one, of any creed,
Any churchyard passing by,—
"*Sacred to the Memory.*"

Wholly sacred: even as lingers
Final word, or last look cast.

Or last clasp of life-warm fingers,
  Which we knew not was the last.
Or, as we apart do lay,
The day after funeral-day,
Their dear relics, great and small,
Who need nothing — yet win all:
All the best we had and have,
Buried in one silent grave.

All our highest aspirations,
  And our closest love of loves;
Our most secret resignations,
  Our best work that man approves,
Yet which jealously we keep
In our mute heart's deepest deep.
So of this poor broken song
Let no echoes here prolong:
For the singer's voice is known
In the heaven of heavens alone.

## TWILIGHT IN THE NORTH.

"Until the day break and the shadows flee away."

THE long northern twilight between the day and the night,
When the heat and the weariness of the world are ended quite:
When the hills grow dim as dreams, and the crystal river seems
Like that River of Life from out the Throne where the blessèd walk in white.

O the weird northern twilight, which is neither night nor day,
When the amber wake of the long-set sun still marks his western way:
And but one great golden star in the deep blue east afar
Warns of sleep, and dark, and midnight — of oblivion and decay.

O the calm northern twilight, when labor is all done,
And the birds in drowsy twitter have dropped silent one by one:

And nothing stirs or sighs in mountains, waters, skies, —
Earth sleeps — but her heart waketh, till the rising of the sun.

O the sweet, sweet twilight, just before the time of rest,
When the black clouds are driven away, and the stormy winds suppressed:
And the dead day smiles so bright, filling earth and heaven with light, —
You would think 't was dawn come back again — but the light is in the west.

O the grand solemn twilight, spreading peace from pole to pole! —
Ere the rains sweep o'er the hillsides, and the waters rise and roll,
In the lull and the calm, come, O angel with the palm —
In the still northern twilight, Azrael, take my soul.

## CATHAIR FHARGUS.

(FERGUS'S SEAT.)

A mountain in the Island of Arran, the summit of which resembles a gigantic human profile.

ITH face turned upward to the changeful sky,
I, Fergus, lie, supine in frozen rest;
The maiden morning clouds slip rosily
Unclasped, unclasping, down my granite breast;
The lightning strikes my brow and passes by.

There 's nothing new beneath the sun, I wot:
I, "Fergus" called, — the great pre-Adamite,
Who for my mortal body blindly sought
Rash immortality, and on this height
Stone-bound, forever am and yet am not, —

There 's nothing new beneath the sun, I say.
Ye pigmies of a later race, who come
And play out your brief generation's play
Below me, know, I too spent my life's sum,
And revelled through my short tumultuous day.

O, what is man that he should mouth so grand
Through his poor thousand as his seventy years?
Whether as king I ruled a trembling land,
Or swayed by tongue or pen my meaner peers,
Or earth's whole learning once did understand, —

What matter? The star-angels know it all.
They who came sweeping through the silent night
And stood before me, yet did not appal:
Till, fighting 'gainst me in their courses bright,*
Celestial smote terrestrial. — Hence, my fall.

Hence, Heaven cursed me with a granted prayer;
Made my hill-seat eternal: bade me keep
My pageant of majestic lone despair,
While one by one into the infinite deep
Sank kindred, realm, throne, world: yet I lay there.

There still I lie. Where are my glories fled?
My wisdom that I boasted as divine?
My grand primeval women fair, who shed
Their whole life's joy to crown one hour of mine,
And lived to curse the love they coveted?

* "The stars in their courses fought against Sisera."

Gone — gone. Uncounted æons have rolled by,
And still my ghost sits by its corpse of stone,
And still the blue smile of the new-formed sky
Finds me unchanged. Slow centuries crawling on
Bring myriads happy death: — I cannot die.

My stone shape mocks the dead man's peaceful face,
And straightened arm that will not labor more;
And yet I yearn for a mean six-foot space
To moulder in, with daisies growing o'er,
Rather than this unearthly resting-place; —

Where pinnacled, my silent effigy
Against the sunset rising clear and cold,
Startles the musing stranger sailing by,
And calls up thoughts that never can be told,
Of life, and death, and immortality.

While I? — I watch this after world that creeps
Nearer and nearer to the feet of God:
Ay, though it labors, struggles, sins, and weeps,
Yet, love-drawn, follows ever Him who trod
Through dim Gethsemane to Cavalry's steeps.

O glorious shame! O royal servitude!
High lowliness, and ignorance all-wise!

Pure life with death, and death with life imbued; —
My centuried splendors crumble 'neath Thine eyes,
Thou Holy One who died upon the Rood!

Therefore, face upward to the Christian heaven,
I, Fergus, lie: expectant, humble, calm;
Dumb emblem of the faith to me not given;
The clouds drop chrism, the stars their midnight psalm
Chant over one, who passed away unshriven.

"*I am the Resurrection and the Life.*"
So from yon mountain graveyard cries the dust
Of child to parent, husband unto wife,
Consoling, and believing in the Just: —
Christ lives, though all the universe died in strife.

Therefore my granite lips forever pray,
"O rains, wash out my sin of self abhorred:
O sun, melt thou my heart of stone away,
Out of Thy plenteous mercy save me, Lord."
And thus I wait till Resurrection-day.

## A TRUE HERO.

JAMES BRAIDWOOD: Died June 22, 1861.

NOT at the battle front, — writ of in story;
Not on the blazing wreck steering to glory;

Not while in martyr-pangs soul and flesh sever,
Died he — this Hero new; hero forever.

No pomp poetic crowned, no forms enchained him,
No friends applauding watched, no foes arraigned him:

Death found him there, without grandeur or beauty,
Only an honest man doing his duty:

Just a God-fearing man, simple and lowly,
Constant at kirk and hearth, kindly as holy:

Death found — and touched him with finger in flying: —
Lo! he rose up complete — hero undying.

Now, all men mourn for him, lovingly raise him
Up from his life obscure, chronicle, praise him;

Tell his last act, done midst peril appalling,
And the last word of cheer from his lips falling;

Follow in multitudes to his grave's portal;
Leave him there, buried in honor immortal.

So many a Hero walks unseen beside us,
Till comes the supreme stroke sent to divide us.

Then the LORD calls His own, — like this man, even,
Carried, Elijah-like, fire-winged, to heaven.

## AT THE SEASIDE.

SOLITARY shining sea
That ripples in the sun,
O gray and melancholy sea,
O'er which the shadows run

O many-voiced and angry sea,
Breaking with moan and strain, —

I, like a humble, chastened child,
Come back to thee again;

And build child-castles and dig moats
Upon the quiet sands,
And twist the cliff-convolvulus
Once more, round idle hands;

And look across that ocean line,
As o'er life's summer sea,
Where many a hope went sailing once,
Full set, with canvas free.

Strange, strange to think how some of them
Their silver sails have furled,
And some have whitely glided down
Into the under world;

And some, dismasted, tossed and torn,
Put back in port once more,
Thankful to ride, with freight still safe,
At anchor near the shore.

Stranger it is to lie at ease
As now, with thoughts that fly
More light and wandering than sea-birds
Between the waves and sky:

To play child's play with shells and weeds,
  And view the ocean grand
Sunk to one wave that may submerge
  A baby-house of sand;

And not once look, or look by chance,
  With old dreams quite suppressed,
Across that mystic wild sea-world
  Of infinite unrest.

O ever solitary sea,
  Of which we all have found
Somewhat to dream or say, — the type
  Of things without a bound —

Love, long as life, and strong as death;
  Faith, humble as sublime;
Eternity, whose large depths hold
  The wrecks of this small Time; —

Unchanging, everlasting sea!
  To spirits soothed and calm
Thy restless moan of other years
  Becomes an endless psalm.

## FISHERMEN—NOT OF GALILEE.

(After reading a certain book.)

THEY have toiled all the night, the long weary night,
They have toiled all the night, Lord, and taken nothing:—
The heavens are as brass, and all flesh seems as grass,
Death strikes with horror and life with loathing.

Walk'st Thou by the waters, the dark silent waters,
The fathomless waters that no line can plumb?
Art Thou Redeemer, or a mere schemer—
Preaching a kingdom that cannot come?

Not a word say'st Thou: no wrath betray'st Thou:
Scarcely delay'st Thou their terrors to lull;
On the shore standing, mutely commanding,
"Let down your nets!"—And they draw them up,—full!

* * * * *

Jesus, Redeemer, — only Redeemer!
I, a poor dreamer, lay hold upon Thee:
Thy will pursuing, though no end viewing,
But simply doing as Thou biddest me.

Though Thee I see not, — either light be not,
Or Thou wilt free not the scales from mine eyes,
I ne'er gainsay Thee, but only obey Thee;
Obedience is better than sacrifice.

Though on my prison gleams no open vision,
Walking Elysian by Galilee's tide,
Unseen, I feel Thee, and death will reveal Thee:
I shall wake in Thy likeness, satisfied.

## THE GOLDEN ISLAND: ARRAN FROM AYR.

EEP set in distant seas it lies;
The morning vapors float and fall,
The noonday clouds above it rise,
Then drop as white as virgin's pall.

And sometimes, when that shroud uplifts,
The far green fields show strange and fair;

Mute waterfalls in silver rifts
Sparkle adown the hillside bare.

But ah! mists gather, more and more;
And though the blue sky has no tears,
And the sea laughs with light all o'er, —
The lovely Island disappears.

O vanished Island of the blest!
O dream of all things pure and high!
Hid in deep seas, as faithful breast
Hides loves that have but seemed to die, —

Whether on seas dividing tossed,
Or led through fertile lands the while,
Better lose all things than have lost
The memory of the morning Isle!

For lo! when gloaming shadows glide,
And all is calm in earth and air,
Above the heaving of the tide
The lonely Island rises fair;

Its purple peaks shine, outlined grand
And clear, as noble lives nigh done;
While stretches bright from land to land
The broad sea-pathway to the sun.

He wraps it in his glory's blaze,
  He stoops to kiss its forehead cold;
And, all transfigured by his rays,
  It gleams — an Isle of molten gold.

The sun may set, the shades descend,
  Earth sleep — and yet while sleeping smile;
But it will live unto life's end —
  That vision of the Golden Isle.

## FALLEN IN THE NIGHT!

T dressed itself in green leaves all the summer long,
Was full of chattering starlings, loud with throstles' song.
Children played beneath it, lovers sat and talked,
Solitary strollers looked up as they walked.
O, so fresh its branches! and its old trunk gray
Was so stately rooted, who forbode decay?
Even when winds had blown it yellow and almost bare,
Softly dropped its chestnuts through the misty air;
Still its few leaves rustled with a faint delight,
And their tender colors charmed the sense of sight,

Filled the soul with beauty, and the heart with peace,
Like sweet sounds departing — sweetest when they cease.

Pelting, undermining, loosening, came the rain;
Through its topmost branches roared the hurricane;
Oft it strained and shivered till the night wore past;
But in dusky daylight there the tree stood fast,
Though its birds had left it, and its leaves were dead,
And its blossoms faded, and its fruit all shed.

Ay, and when last sunset came a wanderer by,
Watched it as aforetime with a musing eye,
Still it wore its scant robes so pathetic gay,
Caught the sun's last glimmer, the new moon's first ray;
And majestic, patient, stood amidst its peers
Waiting for the spring-times of uncounted years.

But the worm was busy, and the days were run;
Of its hundred sunsets this was the last one:
So in quiet midnight, with no eye to see,
None to harm in falling, fell the noble tree!

Says the early laborer, starting at the sight
With a sleepy wonder, "Fallen in the night!"

Says the schoolboy, leaping in a wild delight
Over trunk and branches, "Fallen in the night!"

O thou Tree, thou glory of His hand who made
Nothing ever vainly, thou hast Him obeyed!
Lived thy life, and perished when and how He willed; —
Be all lamentation and all murmurs stilled.
To our last hour live we — fruitful, brave, upright,
'T will be a good ending, "Fallen in the night!"

## A LANCASHIRE DOXOLOGY.

"Some cotton has lately been imported into Farringdon, where the mills have been closed for a considerable time. The people, who were previously in the deepest distress, went out to meet the cotton: the women wept over the bales and kissed them, and finally sang the Doxology over them."
*Spectator* of May 14, 1863.

RAISE God from whom all blessings flow."
Praise Him who sendeth joy and woe.
The Lord who takes, — the Lord who gives, —
O praise Him, all that dies, and lives.

He opens and He shuts his hand,
But why, we cannot understand:
Pours and dries up his mercies' flood,
And yet is still All-perfect Good.

We fathom not the mighty plan,
The mystery of God and man;
We women, when afflictions come,
We only suffer and are dumb.

And when, the tempest passing by,
He gleams out, sun-like, through our sky,
We look up, and through black clouds riven,
We recognize the smile of Heaven.

Ours is no wisdom of the wise,
We have no deep philosophies:
Childlike we take both kiss and rod,
For he who loveth knoweth God.

## YEAR AFTER YEAR:

### A LOVE SONG.

EAR after year the cowslips fill the meadow,
Year after year the skylarks thrill the air,
Year after year, in sunshine or in shadow,
Rolls the world round, love, and finds us as we were.

Year after year, as sure as birds' returning,
Or field-flowers' blossoming above the wintry mould,
Year after year, in work, or mirth, or mourning,
Love we with love's own youth, that never can grow old.

Sweetheart and ladye-love, queen of boyish passion,
Strong hope of manhood, content of age begun;
Loved in a hundred ways, each in a different fashion,
Yet loved supremely, solely, as we never love but one.

Dearest and bonniest! though blanched those curling tresses,
Though loose clings the wedding-ring to that thin hand of thine, —
Brightest of all eyes the eye that love expresses!
Sweetest of all lips the lips long since kissed mine!

So let the world go round with all its sighs and sinning,
Its mad shout o'er fancied bliss, its howl o'er pleasures past:
That which it calls love's end to us was love's beginning: —
I clasp my arms about thy neck and love thee to the last.

## "UNTIL HER DEATH."

I.

NTIL her death!" the words read strange yet real,
Like things afar off suddenly brought near: —
Will it be slow or speedy, full of fear,
Or calm as a spent day of peace ideal?

II.

Will her brown locks lie white on coffin pillow?
Will these her eyes, that sometime were called sweet,
Close, after years of dried-up tears, or meet
Death's dust in midst of weeping? And that billow, —

III.

Her restless heart, — will it be stopped, still heaving?
Or softly ebb 'neath age's placid breath?
Will it be lonely, this mysterious death,
Fit close unto her solitary living, —

IV.

A turning of her face to the wall, nought spoken,
Exchanging this world's light for heaven's; — or will
She part in pain, from warm love to the chill
Unknown, pursued with cries of hearts half-broken?

V.

With fond lips felt through the blind mists of dying,
And close arms clung to in the strugg'e vain; —

Or, these all past, will death to her be gain,
Unto her life's long question God's replying?

VI.

No more. Within his hand, divine as tender,
He holds the mystic measure of her days;
And be they few or many, His the praise, —
In life or death her Keeper and Defender.

VII.

Then, come He soon or late, she will not fear Him;
Be her end lone or loveful, she 'll not grieve;
For He whom she believed in — doth believe —
Will call her from the dust, and she will hear Him.

## THE LOST PIECE OF SILVER.

### A PRAYER.

HOLY Lord Jesus, Thou wilt search till Thou find
This lost piece of silver, — this treasure enshrined
In casket or bosom, once of such store;
Now lying under the dust of Thy floor.

Gentle Lord Jesus, Thou wilt move through the
room —
So empty — so desolate! and light up its gloom:
The lost piece of silver that no man can see,
Merciful Jesus! is beheld clear by Thee.

Defaced and degraded, trampled in the dust,
Its superscription Thou knowest still we trust:
And Thou wilt uplift it and make it re-shine,
For it *was* silver — pure silver of Thine.

Loving Lord Jesus, Thou wilt come through the
dark,
When men are all sleeping and no eye can mark.
Though "clean forgotten, like a dead man out
of mind,"
This lost piece of silver Thou wilt search for —
*and find.*

## OUTWARD BOUND.

UT upon the unknown deep,
Where the unheard oceans sound,
Where the unseen islands sleep, —
Outward bound.
Following towards the silent west
O'er the horizon's curved rim, —

Or to islands of the blest,
— He with me and I with him —
Outward bound.

Nothing but a speck we seem
In the waste of waters round,
Floating, floating like a dream, —
Outward bound.
But within that tiny speck
Two brave hearts with one accord
Past all tumult, grief, and wreck,
Look up calm, — and praise the Lord, —
Outward bound.

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